



# FOCUS

ON FAMILIES

## Work and Family Responsibilities



1994  
INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF THE FAMILY

ABS Catalogue No. 4422.0



NEW ISSUE



AUSTRALIA

1994

International  
Year of the Family

**FOCUS ON FAMILIES**

**WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES**

**RICHARD MADDEN**

Acting Australian Statistician

*Focus on Families: Work and Family Responsibilities* is one of a series produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as part of the International Year of the Family. The publication was compiled by Michael Giess, Robert Hooper and Jenny Dean with the assistance of the Welfare Statistics Unit.

# Focus on Families

## Work and Family Responsibilities

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**INQUIRIES**

- for further information contact Michael Giess on (06) 252 7924 or any ABS state office.
- for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.

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## PREFACE

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1994 as the International Year of the Family (IYF). In Australia there is a strong commitment that IYF should be a catalyst to greater support and quality of life for all families. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is supporting the goals of IYF by providing data on families to inform discussion on the key priority issues identified by the National Council for IYF.

This report explores the relationship between paid employment and family responsibilities. This is particularly important in the light of changes taking place in Australian society which affect traditional family roles and the work environment. The National Council for IYF has identified two key priority issues in support of work and family objectives. These are:

To promote policies which recognise and support the choices which families are making in combining paid work and family care; and

To promote gender equality and explore ways in which men and women can share more equally in the various responsibilities and pleasures of family life.

Workers with family responsibilities are not only a focus of attention of the International Year of the Family. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 156 (1981) was ratified by the Australian Government in 1990. Ratifying the convention makes it an aim of national policy to:

...enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities.

This report is the third in the *Focus on Families* series of publications which provides statistical information on characteristics of families and family members, and factors over the last 10 to 20 years which have influenced the fabric of family life.

Other publications in the series cover the following topics:

- demographics and family formation;
- education and employment;
- caring in families (with particular reference to older people and those with disabilities);
- family life;
- income and housing.

Publications in the series draw on data from a number of sources, including the 1992 Survey of Families in Australia (Family Survey), the 1993 Labour Force Surveys, the 1993 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, the 1992 Time Use Survey and the 1993 Child Care Survey. In addition to publications, data can be accessed through the special tabulation service, the statistical consultancy service, and data in electronic format. Details of published and unpublished data services are outlined in Appendix A.

**RICHARD MADDEN**  
Acting Australian Statistician

Australian Bureau of Statistics  
Canberra ACT  
December 1994



# Focus on Families

## Work and Family Responsibilities

### Main Features

#### Roles within the family

- In 1992, 1.1 million mothers with children aged 0 to 24 were not in the labour force, compared with 170,000 fathers (*Table 1*).
- 2.9 million children aged 24 and under lived in a family with both parents or a lone parent employed (*Figure 3*).
- Employed mothers of 0 to 14 year-old children spent an average of 43 hours a week on household activities while other employed women spent half that amount (21 hours) (*Table 2*).
- Employed partnered mothers of children aged 1 and under averaged 58 hours a week on household work, almost three times the amount of time spent by partnered fathers with children of the same age (21 hours) (*Table 3*).
- In 1992, employed fathers of children aged 11 and under spent a greater number of hours in paid work than other employed men, across all age groups (*Figure 5*).
- The labour force participation rate of principal carers aged 15 to 64 was 60%, compared with a rate of 78% for all people of these ages (*Table 5*).
- Female partners and parents accounted for 95 per cent of those people who experienced a barrier to labour force participation because of family responsibilities (*Table 6*).
- One-fifth of principal carers of people with disabilities who were not in the labour force said they would like to work if they were not in the caring role (*Figure 7*).
- Nine in ten principal carers who were not in the labour force but wanted a job, reported that they thought they would have difficulty getting work if they were no longer in the caring role (*Figure 8*).
- One-third of all principal carers who were not in the labour force but were in paid work prior to entering their caring role, had left work in order to care (*Table 7*).

#### Aspects of work experience

- Mothers were almost 9 times more likely than fathers to give a family reason for working part-time (34% compared with 4% respectively) (*Table 8*).
- Higher proportions of mothers worked part-time (57%) or on a casual basis (35%) than fathers (5% and 11%) (*Table 9*).
- In February 1993, 200,400 job-holders had taken a break away from work for six months or longer since they began working for their current employer. Half of these were employed in the community service industry (*Table 9*).
- Similar proportions of people living in a family (17%) or non-family (20%) arrangement had taken a short absence from their job in a two-week period (*Table 10*).

## Managing work and family responsibilities

- In 1992, 29 per cent of employed parents with children aged 0 to 11 reported they found it difficult to manage working and caring for their children, with a greater proportion of mothers reporting difficulty (37%) than fathers (24%) (*Table 12*).
- Lone parents with children aged 11 and under were more likely to report difficulty in managing their work and family responsibilities (44%) than those in couple families (28%) (*Table 12*).
- Thirty-seven per cent of employed parents who needed child care, or more child care than they received, found it difficult to balance their work and family commitments, compared with 25 per cent of those who stated their child care needs were met (*Table 12*).
- Almost half (46%) of mothers in professional and para-professional occupations reported difficulty managing work and child care responsibilities, compared with one-quarter of fathers in these occupations (*Figure 10*).
- Thirty-one per cent of parents in couple families with two working parents stated difficulty managing work and child care responsibilities, compared with 22 per cent in families with one working parent (*Table 13*).
- Of full-time employed mothers, almost half reported difficulty managing work and caring for their children, compared with 32 per cent of part-time mothers and 24 per cent of full-time employed fathers (*Table 14*).
- Over half (56%) of couple families with both parents employed full-time had at least one parent who reported difficulty. This compared with 45 per cent of couple families where one parent worked full-time and the other part-time, and 35 per cent of couple families in which both parents worked part-time (*Table 15*).

- Of all employed providers of personal care/home help because of a person's age, disability or long-term illness, 27 per cent reported difficulty managing work and providing such care (*Table 16*).
- In 1993, a majority of the 219,000 employed principal carers of people with disabilities (84%) continued to work their usual hours after taking on the caring role (*Table 18*).

## Family and workplace interaction

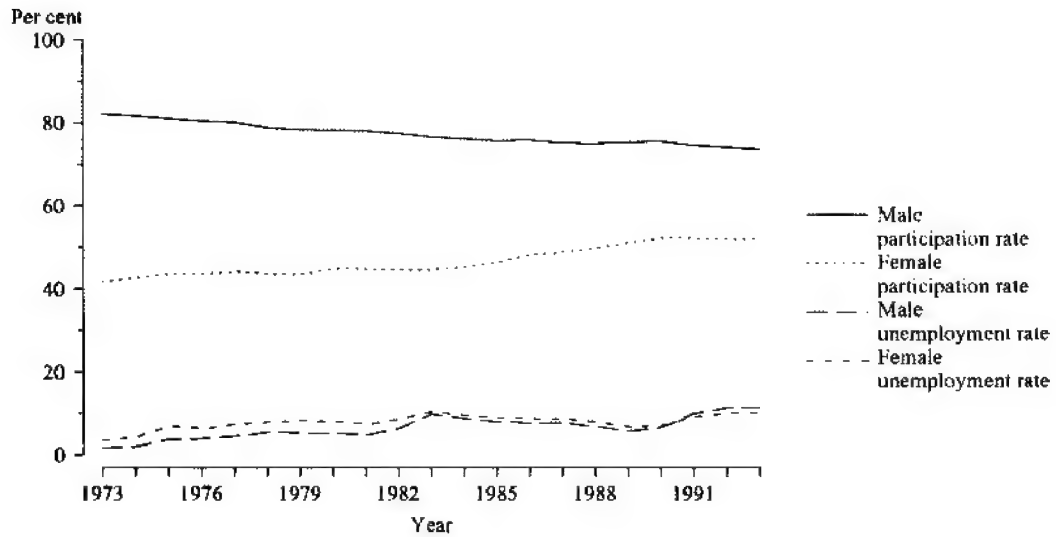
- On an average day in 1992, 9% of employed people brought work home. The average time they spent was 73 minutes (*Tables 19 and 20*).
- Thirteen per cent of employed partnered fathers and 9 per cent of employed partnered mothers with children aged 0 to 14 years, brought work home on an average day (*Table 19*).
- Between 1989 and 1992, the number of people who worked from home in their main job, excluding farmers and farm workers, increased by 18 per cent. This increase was six times the increase in the total number of employed persons over this period (3%) (*Page 27*).
- In 1992, over half a million people reported that their paid work was done mostly at home, accounting for 8 per cent of all employed people (*Table 21*).
- Partnered mothers of 0 to 14 year-old children who worked from home spent 51 hours per week on household activities and 13 hours per week on labour force activities. All employed partnered mothers spent 44 and 23 hours per week respectively (*Table 21*).
- Most mothers of 0 to 14 year-old children who work from home do so for family reasons (53%). Most fathers who work from home do so for work reasons (72%) (*Table 22*).

- In 1992, 54 per cent of employed women with family caring responsibilities either worked from home or lived within fifteen minutes of work, compared with 40 per cent of such men (*Figure 11*).

## Workplace options

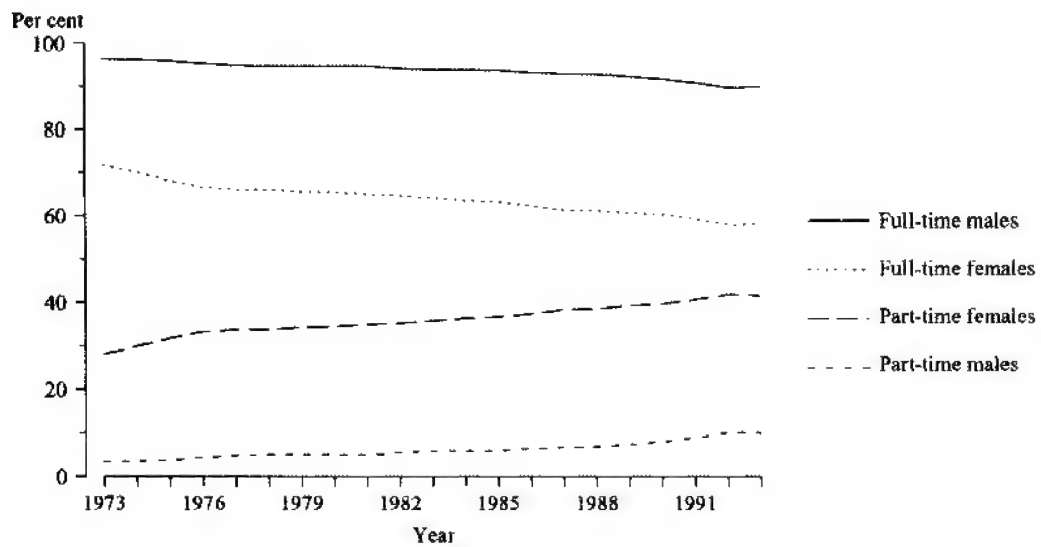
- In 1993, 36% of mothers in couple families with both parents employed, who had a sick child, took time off work to care for that child, compared with 16% of fathers in such families (*Table 23*).
- In couple families with both parents employed, 34 per cent of mothers who took leave to care for a sick child, took unpaid leave, compared with 19 per cent of fathers (*Table 23*).
- In 62% of one parent families and 48% of couple families in which a child was sick, arrangements other than time off work were used to care for the child (*Table 25*).
- Care by a relative other than a sibling was the most common arrangement, other than time off work, used by families to care for a sick child (54%). This arrangement was more likely to be used by lone parents (64%) than those in couple families (52%) (*Table 25*).
- Of the children who were sick and absent from school or formal care for whom a mother reported care arrangements, 42 per cent had mothers who would have preferred an arrangement other than the one that was used (*Table 26*).
- For 77 per cent of the children who were not in the most preferred care arrangement, their mothers would have liked an arrangement which included paid family leave (*Table 26*).
- In 68 per cent of families with employed mothers of children aged 11 and under, mothers used a flexible work arrangement to care for children. In families with employed fathers, a quarter (24%) of fathers used such an arrangement (*Table 27*).
- Around a fifth of employed principal carers of people with a disability, often needed time off work because of their caring role (*Table 28*).
- In 1993, 6 per cent of the 1.2 million families with children aged 11 and under with at least one parent who was a wage or salary earner, were offered assistance with child care by their employer (*Table 29*).

**Figure 1. Persons aged 15 years and over: labour force participation and unemployment rates, 1973 to 1993**



Source: Labour Force Survey

**Figure 2. Persons aged 15 years and over: proportion working full-time and part-time, 1973 to 1993**



Source: Labour Force Survey

# Focus on Families: Work and Family Responsibilities

This publication examines issues affecting people who combine their role as family carers with their paid and unpaid work responsibilities, including parents and people caring for those who are older, are sick or have disabilities. The report explores the difficulties faced by workers with family responsibilities, and looks at which types of assistance are currently available to help them cope with such responsibilities. It also examines how particular caring roles can have an impact on family members, especially in relation to their involvement in the paid workforce.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted Convention 156 in 1981, recognising a right for those who are employed, and those who wish to engage in employment, to participate in the workforce without discrimination and with minimal conflict between their work and family responsibilities (1981a and 1981b). The convention was ratified by Australia in 1990. Governments, unions, employers, other organisations and families have been active participants in the changes which are occurring. Terms and conditions of employment and rates of pay have been affected by changes in legislation. There have also been changes in community attitudes about people's roles at home and at work. These have been accompanied by a slowly growing recognition by employers that a flexible working environment may contribute to economic efficiency and productivity (Work and Family Unit, 1992a and 1992b).

While women are perhaps the most obvious stakeholders in the work and family arena, society as a whole is influenced by, and can benefit from, the structuring of work and family priorities. Research has emphasised the growing number of full-time male carers, and changes in men's roles and experiences (Russell, 1983). It is also acknowledged that labour force participation of one or two parents can increase the level of economic well-being in families and enhance the standard of living of children. To this end, governments and employers have recognised the importance of affordable and quality child care in helping parents make decisions about their work and family life (Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, 1994).

The National Council for the International Year of the Family has described the policies and practices used to assist people to balance their responsibilities in paid and unpaid work as

'promoting choice' (1994, p. 45). One of the main issues concerning whether choice is available to families can be seen in the differences between couple and one parent families. In couple families, partners are able to exercise a variety of options in balancing paid employment with their family requirements, although there are considerable differences in the options most commonly taken up by male and female partners. Lone parents may have less capacity to enter the labour force, because of the absence of a partner who is sharing child care and other responsibilities (see *Focus on Families: Education and Employment*, 4421.0).

The family is a key provider of informal care. The extent to which family members have responsibility for caring, impacts on their ability to participate in the labour force and other aspects of social and economic life. The demands placed on parents of younger children, and on carers of older family members or those with disabilities, are usually more wide-ranging and constant than on those in other family situations. More general caring issues are explored in *Focus on Families: Caring in Families* (4423.0).

## Changes in work and family life

Australian society has undergone much change in the last two decades. Change has occurred in economic conditions, in the composition of the population and of families, and in expectations about the roles adopted by men and women in the home and the workplace.

One major change is the increased participation of women in the paid workforce, which has required adjustment in the way that families and workplaces interact. In 1973, the labour force participation rate of women was 42 per cent. By 1983, it had increased to 45 per cent and in 1993, it was 52 per cent. Most of this increase reflects the move of married women, particularly those with children, into the labour force. Over the same periods, the labour force participation rate of men declined from 82 per cent, to 77 per cent, and then to 74 per cent. These declines are a consequence of trends towards early retirement and increased education participation. As such they will have had minimal impact on families with children.

Increasing unemployment for both men and women has been a feature of the changing composition of the labour force. The unemployment rate among men increased from 2 per cent in 1973 to 12 per cent in 1993. The rate among women increased from 4 per cent in 1973 to 10 per cent in 1993.

*The proportion of employed women who work part-time has increased from 28 per cent in 1973 to 42 per cent in 1993.*

While greater proportions of women are participating in the labour force than in the past, women have maintained the role of major carers within the family. This factor, together with developments in the structure of the service industry and other industries (see *Australian Social Trends*, 4102.0), is consistent with trends, for both men and women, towards part-time work. Consequently, in 1973, 28 per cent of employed women worked part-time, compared with 36 per cent in 1983 and 42 per cent in 1993. The proportion of men working part-time also increased, from 4 per cent in 1973 to 10 per cent in 1993.

A number of demographic and social trends are associated with these labour force changes. The ages at which men and women first marry are rising, and the fertility rate is declining (see *Focus on Families: Demographics and Family Formation*, 4420.0). Those who decide to become partners and parents are more likely to do so after establishing themselves in a job or career. As well as this, women are able to take breaks from the labour force when children are young, rather than retire from it (VandenHeuvel, 1993).

The greater likelihood of both parents or a lone parent to be working has increased the need for the provision of child care. In June 1993, 51 per cent of the 2.6 million children aged 11 years and under with at least one parent employed used some form of child care arrangement. Although most children continue to be cared for informally, a growing proportion of parents are relying on formal care arrangements. In June 1987, 393,500 children (16%) used formal care, whereas in 1993

the number was 520,100 (20%) (see *Child Care, Australia*, 4402.0).

Family responsibilities are not restricted to the care of children, but also include the care of other family members. The growing proportion of people in the Australian population aged 65 and over means that the care of older people may become more frequent for family members in the future than at present. It is also clear, however, that the changing demographic and labour force characteristics of the population will influence the direction of support flows for both older and younger family members. A minority of older people require ongoing care, while many provide members of their family with financial and accommodation assistance, as well as child care (see *Australia's Families, Selected Findings*, 4418.0).

## Roles within the family

The decisions made by men and women about family priorities, and the responsibilities they assume, are based on a variety of attitudes and traditional family roles, which may not readily change over time. Family members are taking on responsibilities within a society that places increasing emphasis on the link between paid work and family well-being. The roles that men and women adopt in terms of paid and unpaid work may also vary by age and life stage.

In couple families with children, there are considerable differences in the options that male and female partners take up in order to balance paid work with their family requirements. In 1992, 52 per cent had both parents employed, 32 per cent had the male parent only employed, 4 per cent had the female parent only employed, and 13 per cent had neither parent employed (see *Focus on Families: Education and Employment*, 4421.0).

For lone parents, opportunities to enter the labour force or to participate in family life are often constrained by child care responsibilities and lack of relevant employment experience, particularly when their children are young. In 1992, 46 per cent of lone parents aged 15 to 64 were employed, while 43 per cent were not in the labour force. The unemployment rate for lone parents of these ages was 20 per cent, compared with 8 per cent for parents and partners in couple families (see *Focus on Families: Education and Employment*, 4421.0).



## Parents and the labour force

Despite the increasing participation of women in the labour force, mothers are still considerably more likely than fathers not to be in the labour force. While many mothers return to the labour force as their children grow older, their participation remains lower than that for fathers, regardless of the age of the youngest child living at home. At the time when mothers are most likely to be outside the labour force caring for young children, the labour force participation rate for fathers is at its highest.

In 1992, 61 per cent of mothers who had children aged 24 and under living with them, were in the labour force, compared with 93 per cent of fathers with children in the same age group. In total, 1.1 million mothers with children in this age group were not in the labour force, compared with 170,000 fathers.

*In 1992, 46% of mothers with children aged 0 to 4 were in the labour force compared with 96% of fathers.*

For mothers, labour force participation is lowest among those with very young children. Forty-six

per cent of those whose youngest child was aged 4 and under were in the labour force. Labour force participation increased to 73 per cent for those whose youngest child was aged 15 to 19, then decreased for those with 20 to 24 year-olds, in part reflecting the impact of retirement on this older group. Labour force participation remained relatively high for fathers regardless of the age of their children, with participation at its highest level for fathers with 0 to 4 year-olds (96%), dropping to 82 per cent for fathers whose youngest child living at home was aged 20 to 24.

*In 1992, almost 450,000 parents with children aged 24 and under were not in the labour force, but wanted a job.*

It is not only important to determine the characteristics of parents in the labour force, but also those who, although not actively seeking work, would nevertheless like a paid job. In 1992, there were almost 450,000 parents who were not in the labour force but wanted a job and had children aged 24. This was slightly over a third of parents who were not in the labour force, with little difference between men and women (35% and 36% respectively). Generally, the proportion of

**Table 1. Parents with children aged 0 to 24 years: age of youngest child in household by labour force status, 1992**

Sex of parent by age of youngest child	In the labour force			Not in the labour force			Total
	Employed	Unemployment rate	Total	Labour force participation rate	Wants a job	Total	
	- % -		- '000 -	- % -		- '000 -	
<b>Fathers</b>							
0-4	90.0	10.0	895.4	96.1	52.6	35.9	931.2
5-9	93.4	6.6	485.0	95.7	43.6	21.6	506.6
10-14	92.2	7.8	424.2	93.3	38.2	30.6	454.8
15-19	92.1	7.9	379.2	90.5	27.0	39.7	418.9
20-24	92.1	7.9	173.2	81.9	19.0	38.3	211.5
<b>Total fathers</b>	<b>91.6</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>2,357.0</b>	<b>93.4</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>166.1</b>	<b>2,523.1</b>
<b>Mothers</b>							
0-4	85.5	14.5	476.8	46.4	34.8	551.8	1,028.5
5-9	88.7	11.3	382.9	69.1	47.1	171.3	554.3
10-14	90.5	9.5	362.0	71.2	44.7	146.1	508.1
15-19	93.5	6.5	334.4	72.9	30.2	124.0	458.4
20-24	91.1	8.9	145.4	62.5	14.2	87.2	232.6
<b>Total mothers</b>	<b>89.3</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>1,701.5</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>35.9</b>	<b>1,080.4</b>	<b>2,782.0</b>
<b>Total parents with children aged 0-24</b>	<b>90.6</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>4,058.5</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>35.8</b>	<b>1,246.5</b>	<b>5,305.0</b>

Source: Family Survey

mothers and fathers who were not in the labour force but wanted a job, decreased as the age of their youngest child increased. However, one-third of mothers of 0 to 4 years-olds wanted a job, which was considerably lower than for mothers of 5 to 9 year-olds (47%) and 10 to 14 year-olds (45%).

For those parents who leave the labour force for a period of time to care for children, re-entering the labour force may not mean gaining paid employment. Younger parents who have little or no previous employment experience may also have difficulty entering or re-entering the labour force. In 1992, 2.2 million fathers and 1.5 million mothers with children aged 24 and under were employed. Overall, the unemployment rate was 8 per cent among fathers and 11 per cent among mothers. For parents of both sexes, unemployment was highest when their youngest child was aged 0 to 4, although this was more pronounced for mothers than fathers (15% compared with 10%). Rates were consistently higher for mothers than for fathers, except for those whose youngest child was aged 15 to 19 (7% and 8% respectively).

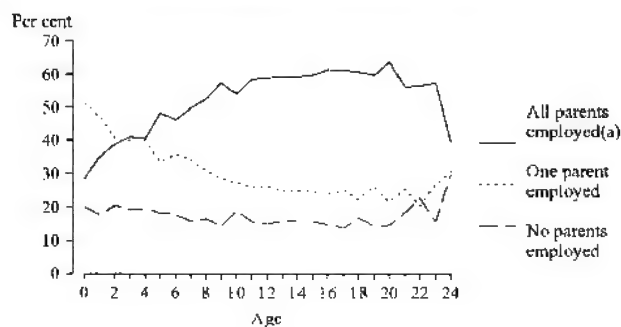
*In 1992, 2.9 million children aged 0 to 24 lived in a family with both parents or lone parent employed.*

The employment circumstances of parents have an impact on children, as families seek to balance the competing demands of child care and paid employment. In 1992, 2.9 million children aged 24 and under had both parents or a lone parent employed (52%), 1.7 million children had one of two parents employed (31%), and 956,000 children had neither parent (or a lone parent) employed (17%). Older children were more likely to live with employed parents. The proportion of children with both parents or a lone parent employed rose from 29 per cent for those under 1 year of age, to around 60 per cent for those 14 and over. The proportion of children with one of two parents employed dropped from 51 per cent for those under 1, to around 25 per cent for those aged 14 and over. A fifth of children aged under 1 had neither parent employed, and for other age groups this figure remained relatively constant.

Up to the age of eight years, children were more likely to have one or no parent in paid employment than they were to have both parents

or a lone parent employed. After this age, between 50 and 60 per cent of children had both parents or a lone parent in paid employment. The exception to this were 24 year-old children, where 40 per cent had both parents or a lone parent employed. This is consistent with more parents of children of this age having retired.

**Figure 3. Children aged 0 to 24 years: labour force status of parents, 1992**



(a) Includes employed lone parents.

Source: Family Survey

## Household and labour force activities

*If employed, mothers of children aged 0 to 14 averaged 43 hours a week on unpaid household work, compared with 21 hours for those without children in this age group.*

One of the factors that parents must take into account, relates to the number of hours they devote to paid labour force activities as opposed to unpaid household work. Labour force activities include paid employment and travel to work. Unpaid household work, which is considered to be outside the boundary of economic activity, includes food preparation, washing, ironing, cleaning and tidying, as well as shopping and child care. In terms of the hours people spend in these types of activities, there is a general trade-off between paid and unpaid work, and a fair degree of segregation of household activities between men and women who are in paid work, particularly among those with younger children.

Employed mothers with young children spend more time on household work than other employed people. In 1992, employed mothers of 0

to 14 year-old children spent an average of 43 hours a week on household activities while other employed women spent half that amount (21 hours). Full-time employed mothers of children aged 0 to 14 averaged 36 hours a week on household activities, compared with 20 hours for other full-time employed women. Part-time employed mothers of children of these ages averaged 47 hours a week on household activities, compared with 24 hours for other part-time employed women. The time spent on household activities was greater for employed mothers in every age group compared with other women.

Generally, the same pattern applied for employed fathers of children aged 14 and under, although the average time spent in household work was less than that for women. Full-time employed fathers of children aged 14 and under averaged 18 hours a week on household activities, which was more

than the 13 hours spent by other full-time employed men. Among fathers in part-time work with 0 to 14 year-old children, the average amount of time spent on household activities per week was 23 hours, compared with 13 hours by other part-time employed men.

Employed fathers of 0 to 14 year-olds averaged the same amount of time on combined household and labour force activities as employed mothers of 0 to 14 year-olds (66 hours), while other employed men spent about three hours less on combined household and labour force activities (57 hours) than other employed women (60 hours). The average time spent by part-time employed men on combined household and labour force activities, however, was less than the average time spent by part-time employed women on these activities, regardless of the presence of children aged 14 and under in the household.

**Table 2. Employed persons aged 15 years and over: selected characteristics by presence of children aged 0 to 14 years by average time spent on labour force and unpaid household(a) activities, 1992**

Selected characteristics	With children aged 0-14			Without children aged 0-14		
	Labour force	Household	Total	Labour force	Household	Total
- hours per week -						
<b>Males</b>						
Employment status-						
Full-time	48.7	17.9	66.6	47.6	12.7	60.3
Part-time	33.0	23.2	56.2	25.0	13.2	38.2
Age-						
15-24	*48.9	*15.2	*64.1	37.9	7.9	45.8
25-34	47.4	18.5	58.5	45.1	13.4	58.5
35-44	48.5	18.1	66.6	53.7	12.6	66.3
45 and over	46.7	18.2	64.9	37.0	16.1	53.2
<b>All employed males</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>66.0</b>	<b>44.2</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>56.9</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>1,638.4</b>	<b>1,638.4</b>	<b>1,638.4</b>	<b>2,755.2</b>	<b>2,755.2</b>	<b>2,755.2</b>
<b>Females</b>						
Employment status-						
Full-time	33.6	35.6	69.2	40.7	19.6	60.4
Part-time	16.3	47.0	63.4	20.8	24.4	45.2
Age-						
15-24	12.7	47.4	60.0	17.2	12.7	30.0
25-34	15.1	50.1	65.0	29.9	21.8	51.7
35-44	18.0	45.0	63.0	26.3	30.8	57.1
45 and over	25.6	38.5	64.1	30.3	30.1	60.3
<b>All employed females</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>65.6</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>60.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>1,107.5</b>	<b>1,107.5</b>	<b>1,107.5</b>	<b>2,103.3</b>	<b>2,103.3</b>	<b>2,103.3</b>

(a) includes domestic, child care and purchasing activities.

Source: Time Use Survey

People may pass through a variety of life stages which signal distinct social states. These life stages may include youth, partnering, parenthood, retirement, separation and widowhood. The allocation of household and labour force tasks, as well as the total amount of time devoted to such activities, is influenced by these life stages.

*The presence of very young children has less effect on the household work time of employed fathers than on that of employed mothers.*

The effect of marriage on time spent on household tasks can be illustrated by comparing people living in non-family or parental households, with those who are partnered. In 1992, young employed men and women who were living with their parent(s) averaged the least amount of time on household activities of all life stage groups (8 and 12 hours respectively). Average time spent on such activities was slightly higher for employed men and women living in group households (12 and 14 hours respectively), and slightly higher again for men and women who lived alone or who were partnered but without children, varying with age (between 14 and 18 hours for men, and between 18 and 29 hours for women).

The presence of very young children has less effect on employed fathers' household work time than on employed mothers' household work time. Employed partnered mothers of children aged 1 and under averaged 58 hours a week in household work, almost three times the amount of time spent by partnered fathers with children of the same age (21 hours). However, fathers of young children are likely to spend considerably more time in paid work than mothers of young children. As the age of children increased, the hours spent on household work decreased, from 44 hours among employed mothers of 2 to 4 year-olds, to 32 hours among employed mothers of children aged 15 and over. The age of children had little influence on employed fathers' time spent on household work, ranging from 20 hours among fathers of 2 to 4 year-olds, to 15 hours among fathers of children aged 15 and over. Similarly, employed lone mothers of children aged 14 and under spent 36 hours on household work which decreased to 24 hours for mothers of children aged 15 and over. Employed lone fathers' hours on household work remained relatively constant, regardless of the age of children (12 and 16 hours respectively).

**Table 3. Employed persons aged 15 years and over: average time spent on unpaid household(a) activities by household type by selected life stage, 1992**

Household type and life stage	Males		Females	
	Household - hours per week -	Total - '000 -	Household - hours per week -	Total - '000 -
<b>Family households(b)</b>				
<i>Partner in couple with children</i>				
Age of youngest child-				
0-1	20.9	399.6	57.7	186.1
2-4	20.1	311.7	44.4	160.0
5-9	16.7	408.5	42.0	266.9
10-14	16.5	403.6	36.0	297.6
15 and over	15.1	450.4	32.2	360.3
<i>Partner in couple without children</i>				
Age-				
44 and under	14.7	428.4	22.0	387.9
45-59	16.2	274.7	28.7	179.8
60 and over	17.6	131.0	29.3	38.0
<i>Lone parent</i>				
Age of youngest child-				
0-14	12.1	*11.4	36.2	112.5
15 and over	16.3	*25.2	24.2	71.3
<i>Child aged 15-24</i>	7.8	659.6	12.1	430.7
<b>Non-family households</b>				
<i>Living alone</i>				
Age-				
15-59	14.1	228.6	18.1	180.2
60 and over	16.3	*22.9	26.5	*11.4
<i>In a group household</i>	12.0	258.6	14.3	223.8

(a) Includes domestic, child care and purchasing activities. Time spent by persons on leave from work is included. (b) Excludes families with unrelated and other related individuals living in the household.

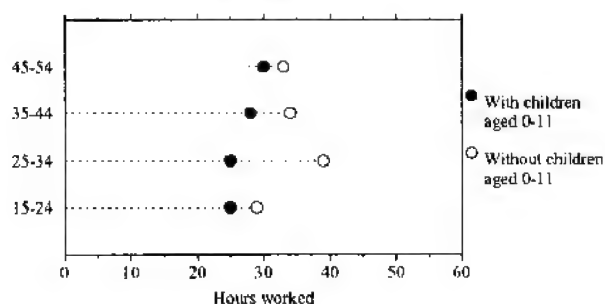
Source: Time Use Survey

## Parents and paid work

Employed mothers of younger children average the least amount of time in paid work, while fathers of younger children average the greatest amount of time in paid work. In 1992, there were almost 2.3 million employed parents with children aged 11 and under. About 613,000 parents with children of these ages worked part-time, and of these, 90 per cent were mothers. Of the 1.7 million full-time employed parents of 0 to 11 year-olds, 81 per cent were fathers (see *Australia's Families, Selected Findings*, 4418.0).

Employed mothers aged 15 to 24 worked an average of 25 hours per week in all jobs, while other employed women in this age group worked 29 hours. Employed mothers aged 25 to 34 also averaged 25 hours per week, but other women of these ages averaged 39 hours. While work hours increased slightly for women aged 35 and over, mothers still worked less hours than other women.

**Figure 4. Employed females aged 15 to 54 years: average hours worked per week by whether had children, 1992**



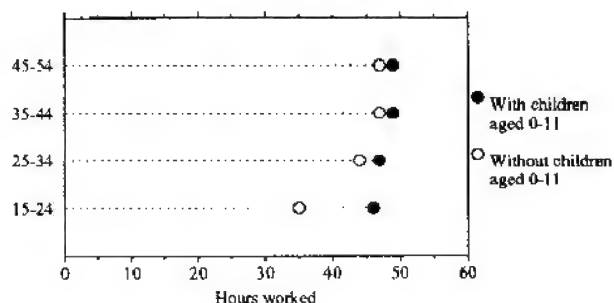
Source: Family Survey

In contrast, employed fathers of children aged 11 and under worked a greater number of hours than other employed men across all age groups. This was particularly the case for employed fathers aged 15 to 24, who worked an average of 46 hours

per week, compared with other employed men in this age group who worked an average of 35 hours. This reflects the prevalence of part-time work among young men without children.

*Fathers of children aged 11 and under spend more time per week in paid work than other employed men.*

**Figure 5. Employed males aged 15 to 54 years: average hours worked per week by whether had children, 1992**



Source: Family Survey

On average, employed mothers of 0 to 11 year-old children spent fewer hours in paid work than employed fathers of children of these ages, ranging

**Table 4. Providers of personal care/home help(a): labour force status, 1992**

Sex and age	In the labour force			Not in the labour force			Total
	Employed	Unemployment rate	Total	Labour force participation rate	Wants a job	Total	
	- % -	- % -	- '000 -	- % -	- % -	- '000 -	
<b>Males</b>							
15-24	73.0	27.0	58.5	76.0	42.9	18.5	77.0
25-34	87.4	12.6	113.8	95.9	84.8	*4.9	118.7
35-44	94.3	5.7	154.8	94.9	46.3	*8.3	163.1
45-54	92.9	*7.1	101.6	91.8	*37.8	9.1	110.7
55-64	86.9	*13.1	32.7	65.2	*28.8	17.4	50.1
65 and over	100.0	**	*5.2	*12.0	**2.7	38.0	43.2
<b>Total males</b>	<b>89.2</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>466.5</b>	<b>82.9</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>96.2</b>	<b>562.7</b>
<b>Females</b>							
15-24	76.8	23.2	66.4	75.0	40.3	22.1	88.5
25-34	86.7	13.3	77.3	70.2	43.8	32.8	110.1
35-44	92.6	*7.4	106.5	70.7	42.0	44.0	150.5
45-54	94.3	*5.7	86.1	63.6	20.7	49.4	135.5
55-64	94.8	**5.2	20.1	28.9	*10.1	49.5	69.7
65 and over	100.0	**	*2.8	*4.6	*6.3	58.4	61.2
<b>Total females</b>	<b>89.0</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>359.3</b>	<b>58.4</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>256.2</b>	<b>615.5</b>
<b>All providers of personal care/home help</b>	<b>89.1</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>825.8</b>	<b>70.1</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>352.4</b>	<b>1,178.3</b>

(a) To family members because of long term illness, disability or old age.

Source: Family Survey

from an average of 25 to 30 hours per week across the different age groups. Depending on their age, employed fathers averaged between 46 and 49 hours per week in paid work.

## Providers of care to other family members

For people who are older, or who have a long-term illness or disability, informal assistance with activities such as housework, repairs, meal preparation or personal care can be a vital part of coping with daily living. In 1992, 1.2 million people were providing this kind of support to another family member. The labour force participation rate for these providers of personal care/home help was 70 per cent. Overall, providers of personal care/home help who were not in the labour force were less likely to indicate that they would like a job (24%) than parents who were not in the labour force with children aged 24 and under (36%).

As for parents, the labour force participation rate for female providers of personal care/home help was lower than that for male providers (58% compared with 83%). For women, labour force participation was highest among those aged 15 to 24 (75%). Participation then declined as age increased, with the rate of decline accelerating sharply after 44 years of age. However, among male providers of care, labour force participation was lower than average among 15 to 24 year-olds (76%) but remained over 90 per cent for those aged 25 to 54. Overall, there were 256,000 female and 96,000 male providers of personal care/home help who were not in the labour force.

The unemployment rate for providers of personal care/home help was 11 per cent for both men and women, the same as the unemployment rate for all persons in families (see *Focus on Families: Education and Employment*, 4421.0).

## Principal carers and the labour force

*The labour force participation rate of principal carers aged 15 to 64 was 60%, compared with a rate of 78% for all people of these ages.*

Caring responsibilities may be especially demanding for those who are providing the most informal help to someone with a disability. In 1993, there were about 540,000 principal carers of people who required assistance with self-care, mobility or verbal communication tasks. The majority of principal carers were family members (95%), with the remainder caring for friends or neighbours. In considering the employment experiences of principal carers, their demographic characteristics must be taken into account, as their participation rates are partly related to age and sex as well as their caring role. Reflecting the demographic characteristics of those that they care for, the proportion of principal carers aged 65 and over (21%) is higher than for the general population (15%). As well as this, the majority of principal carers are women (67%) (see *Focus on Families: Caring in Families*, 4423.0).

**Table 5. Persons aged 15 years and over(a): whether a principal carer(b) by labour force status, 1993**

Whether principal carer and age	Employed	Labour force participation rate	Not in the labour force	Total	Unemployment rate
		- % -		- '000 -	- % -
<i>Principal carers</i>					
15-64	50.4	59.5	40.5	425.9	15.4
65 and over	4.5	*4.4	95.6	112.0	**
<b>Total principal carers</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>537.9</b>	<b>15.1</b>
<i>All persons</i>					
15-64	63.2	77.7	22.3	11,108.2	12.7
65 and over	6.0	6.2	93.8	1,907.9	*4.6
<b>Total persons</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>67.2</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>13,106.1</b>	<b>12.5</b>

(a) Excludes 20,406 boarding school pupils and 597,320 persons still at school. A small number of these (3,200) were also principal carers. (b) Of persons with a disability who require assistance with self-care, mobility or verbal communication. Five per cent were caring for non-family members.

Source: Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers



The labour force participation rate of principal carers (48%) was lower than for all people (67%). The rate among principal carers aged 15 to 64 was 60 per cent, while the rate for all people of these ages was 78 per cent. Principal carers aged 15 to 64 were less likely to be employed (50%) than all persons of these ages (63%). The unemployment rate was slightly higher for principal carers (15%) than for all persons (13%).

## Barriers to labour force participation

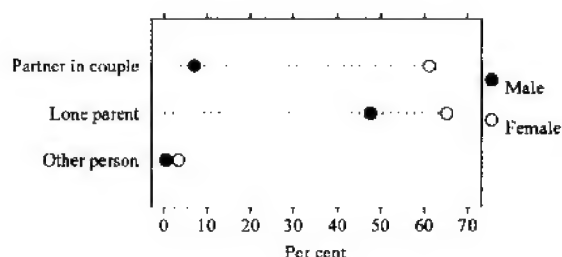
*In 1992, 340,000 people indicated family reasons as a barrier to labour force participation — 95% of whom were female partners or parents.*

The caring role can impact on the opportunities that people have to participate in the labour force. Those caring for children or other family members may not be able to enter the labour force because of their caring role, or they may have left work to take up caring responsibilities. It may also be more difficult for these people to resume paid work, because they have been out of the labour force for substantial periods of time.

People who would like a job, but are not looking for work, or are looking for work, but are not available to start within a week, can be referred to as experiencing barriers to labour force participation. In 1992, about 340,000 people said that their family responsibilities were the main reason why they experienced a barrier to labour force participation. (see *Focus on Families: Education and Employment*, 4421.0).

Partners or parents who experienced barriers to labour force participation were more likely than other family members to indicate family responsibilities as a barrier. Of partners and parents who experienced a barrier, the reason was more frequently family-related among women than men. Female partners in couple families were almost nine times more likely than male partners to state family reasons for the barrier (61% and 7% respectively), while two-thirds of lone mothers (65%) and about half of lone fathers (48%) stated family reasons as a barrier.

**Figure 6. Persons with a barrier to labour force participation: proportion who indicated family reasons for barrier, 1992**



Source: Family Survey

Overall, female partners and parents accounted for 95 per cent of those who experienced a barrier to labour force participation because of their family responsibilities. Almost three-quarters (72%) of these women identified that caring for children was the reason for not being able to look for work or start a job.

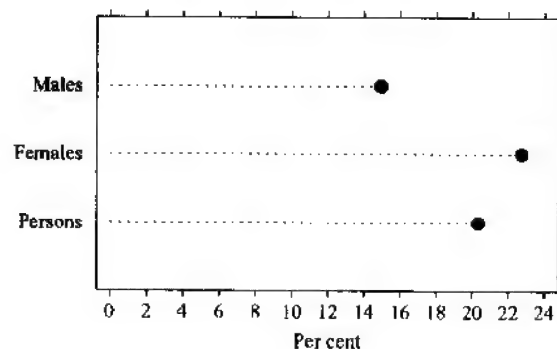
**Table 6. Females who were a partner or parent for whom family reasons were a barrier to labour force participation: reason for barrier, 1992**

Type of barrier	Proportion with barrier - % -
Pregnancy	5.0
Caring for child(ren)	72.0
Caring for elderly/sick/disabled family member	3.8
Looking after spouse and/or home	5.8
Other	13.5
<b>All female partners and parents with barrier</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>319.8</b>

Source: Family Survey

The caring responsibilities of principal carers of people with disabilities impacts on their ability to participate in the labour force. In 1993, there were 279,400 principal carers who were not in the labour force. One-fifth of these said they would like to work if they were not in the caring role. The proportions of male and female carers who were not in the labour force but would like a job were 15 per cent and 23 per cent respectively.

**Figure 7. Principal carers(a) not in the labour force: proportion who would like to work if not in caring role, 1993**



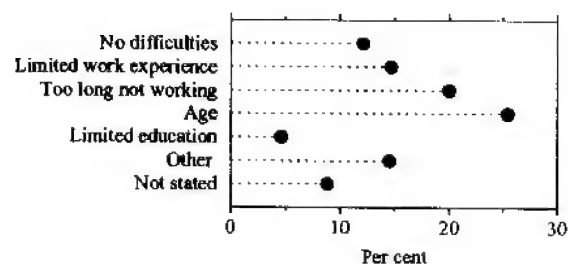
(a) Of persons with a disability who required assistance with self-care, mobility or verbal communication. Five per cent were caring for non-family members.

Source: Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers

*Nine in ten principal carers who were not in the labour force but wanted a job, believed they would have difficulty finding work if they were no longer in the caring role.*

The difficulties most frequently anticipated by principal carers in getting a job if no longer in the caring role were their age (25%), length of time out of the labour force (20%) and limited work experience (15%). Only about a tenth of principal carers believed they would have no difficulty in finding employment if they were not in the caring role.

**Figure 8. Principal carers(a) not in the labour force who would like to work if not in caring role: perceived difficulty in getting a job, 1993**



(a) Of persons with a disability who required assistance with self-care, mobility or verbal communication. Five per cent were caring for non-family members.

Source: Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers

*Of the 94,000 principal carers who had been in paid work prior to caring, a third had left work for their caring role.*

One-third of all principal carers who were not in the labour force had been in paid employment prior to entering their caring role. Of these 94,000 people, one-third had left work in order to undertake their caring responsibilities. A large proportion of carers who had left work for the caring role were women aged between 45 and 64 (42%). However, there was also a relatively large proportion of female carers aged 25 to 44 who had left work to care (26%), which was much greater than the proportion of male carers in this age group who had done so (3%).

Principal carers aged 65 and over were less likely to have left paid work for the caring role (14%). This partly reflects the lower labour force participation of women of these generations, and partly spouse care for partners whose handicaps developed with advancing age.

**Table 7. Principal carers(a) not in the labour force who were employed before caring role: whether left work for caring role, 1993**

Whether left work to care and age	Males	Females	Persons
- % -			
<i>Left work to care</i>			
Age-			
25-44	**11.4	35.4	29.3
45-64	63.1	55.7	56.8
65 and over	*25.5	**6.9	*14.0
<b>All principal carers who left work to care</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>*7.3</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>28.7</b>
<i>Did not leave work to care ('000)</i>	31.0	34.7	65.7
<b>All principal carers not in the labour force who were employed ('000)</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>56.1</b>	<b>94.4</b>

(a) Of persons with a disability who require assistance with self-care, mobility or verbal communication. Five per cent were caring for non-family members.

Source: Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers



## Aspects of work experience

Many people with family responsibilities take on jobs which fit in with the requirements of their families, rather than, or in addition to, their own personal requirements. They may vary their hours of work, or opt for alternative types of employment which offer less than the ideal in terms of career advancement or personal satisfaction. They may find it necessary to take lengthy breaks from their jobs to care for newly-born children or other family members, or to have shorter absences for a variety of family reasons.

There were 6.3 million employees in February 1993, a group which included all people who were aged 15 and over and worked for wages or salary, but mainly excluded those who were self-employed (see *glossary* for more details). A third (32%) of these were parents of children aged 14 years and under. Such parents were more likely to work part-time (26%) than all employees (22%), with some variation depending on the sex of the parent. A much higher proportion of mothers worked part-time (57%) than fathers (5%). A higher proportion of mothers also worked on a casual basis (35%) than fathers (11%).

## Why people work part-time

Among part-time workers overall, relatively few people said they worked part-time for family reasons, with a greater proportion of female

part-time employees doing so (16%) than male part-time employees (1%). The majority of reasons for working part-time were personal or work-related (80% for males and 52% for females). These reasons included attendance at educational institutions, unavailability of work and the requirements of the job (see *Working Arrangements, Australia*, 6342.0).

*Mothers of 0 to 14 year-olds were almost 9 times more likely to work part-time for family reasons (34%) than fathers (4%).*

Almost one-third (31%) of parents with children aged 14 and under worked part-time for family reasons, compared with less than 1 per cent of other part-time workers. There was a large difference in the reasons given by parents for working part-time, with mothers almost 9 times more likely than fathers to do so for a family reason (34% and 4% respectively).

## Long breaks from work

One of the measures which can be used to establish flexibility of employment conditions is the extent to which individual employees take long periods of time away from work without their employment being subject to termination. The demographic characteristics of people who take

**Table 8. Persons who were employed part-time(a): reason for working part-time by living arrangements, August 1993**

Reason	Parents with children aged 0-14		Other family members(b)		Not in a family(c)		Total		Persons
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	
Family reasons	*3.8	33.7	**0.4	1.1	**0.2	**0.2	*0.9	15.5	12.3
Personal reasons	*8.7	2.1	46.2	26.3	31.7	24.6	38.4	15.4	20.4
Work reasons	65.6	31.5	35.1	38.9	49.2	47.7	41.8	36.3	37.5
Own choice	11.7	24.5	9.4	25.4	12.0	16.7	10.1	24.4	21.3
Other reasons/don't know	10.2	8.1	8.8	8.3	*6.9	10.9	8.8	8.4	8.5
<b>All persons who were employed part-time</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>496.7</b>	<b>217.2</b>	<b>537.6</b>	<b>46.7</b>	<b>85.4</b>	<b>310.3</b>	<b>1,119.6</b>	<b>1,429.9</b>

(a) Includes only those persons for whom family status was determined. (b) Includes parents with children aged 15 years and over, and children aged 15 years and over. (c) Comprises lone persons, persons in group households and unrelated individuals living with a family.

Source: *Working Arrangements and Absences From Work Survey*

**Table 9. Employees(a) and job-holders(b) aged 15 years and over: selected characteristics, February 1993**

Selected characteristics	Employees			Employees with children aged 0-14 years			Job-holders who had a break from work(c)		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
- % -									
<i>Age</i>									
15-24	20.7	25.5	22.8	2.2	3.4	2.6	6.8	6.7	6.8
25-34	27.3	26.3	26.8	32.5	36.4	34.0	21.9	45.0	37.9
35-44	25.2	25.6	25.3	47.9	51.0	49.2	30.1	36.4	34.5
45-54	18.7	17.7	18.2	16.1	9.0	13.3	28.8	9.6	15.5
55 and over	8.2	5.0	6.8	1.4	*0.2	0.9	12.4	*2.2	5.4
<i>Employment status</i>									
Full-time	91.0	61.1	77.9	95.3	43.0	74.5	94.5	60.1	70.7
Part-time	9.0	38.9	22.1	4.7	57.0	25.5	5.5	39.9	29.3
<i>Whether permanent or casual employee</i>									
Permanent	84.9	73.0	79.6	89.1	65.2	79.6	89.8	85.3	86.7
Casual	15.1	27.0	20.4	10.9	34.8	20.4	10.2	14.7	13.3
<i>Occupation</i>									
Managers and administrators	10.5	3.5	7.4	14.2	3.1	9.8	*5.1	3.6	4.1
Professionals	14.2	14.0	14.1	17.8	16.9	17.4	33.5	31.2	31.9
Para-professionals	6.4	7.7	7.0	6.9	9.3	7.9	7.0	13.1	11.2
Tradespersons	22.4	3.0	13.9	19.8	2.5	12.9	18.1	*1.4	6.6
Clerks	7.9	32.3	18.6	7.2	30.5	16.5	*5.2	27.7	20.8
Salespersons, and personal services	9.9	24.2	16.2	8.5	21.4	13.6	*4.0	14.9	11.6
Plant and machine operators, and drivers	10.9	2.3	7.1	11.9	2.5	8.1	14.9	*0.6	5.0
Labourers and related workers	17.8	12.9	15.6	13.7	13.9	13.8	12.1	7.5	8.9
<i>Industry of employment</i>									
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2.9	1.1	2.1	2.5	1.4	2.1	*3.1	*0.8	*1.5
Mining	2.1	0.3	1.3	2.5	*0.2	1.6	*1.7	*0.2	*0.6
Manufacturing	21.2	10.1	16.3	21.7	10.1	17.1	15.3	7.6	10.0
Electricity, gas and water	2.5	0.4	1.6	3.0	*0.4	2.0	*4.3	*0.4	*1.6
Construction	8.0	1.3	5.0	7.0	1.7	4.9	7.9	*0.4	2.7
Wholesale and retail trade	19.4	21.2	20.2	17.6	16.8	17.3	6.9	8.0	7.6
Transport and storage	6.8	2.3	4.8	7.5	1.8	5.2	6.4	*1.0	2.7
Communication	2.2	1.2	1.7	2.5	0.9	1.9	*2.8	2.6	2.7
Finance, property and business services	9.9	13.5	11.5	10.6	12.5	11.3	*5.1	10.9	9.1
Public administration and defence	6.5	5.8	6.2	6.8	5.5	6.3	11.8	8.7	9.6
Community services	13.0	32.8	21.7	14.5	39.7	24.5	32.1	56.1	48.7
Recreation, personal and other services	5.6	10.0	7.6	3.8	9.1	6.0	*2.6	3.5	3.2
<i>Sector of employment</i>									
Public	25.4	28.6	26.8	28.2	32.0	29.8	53.5	61.2	58.8
Private	73.8	70.4	72.3	71.1	66.8	69.4	44.9	38.5	40.5
Don't know	0.8	1.0	0.9	0.6	1.1	0.8	*1.6	*0.3	*0.7
<i>Size of location</i>									
Less than 10 persons	25.8	27.4	26.5	24.2	29.3	26.3	19.2	13.2	15.1
10-19 persons	11.9	14.0	12.8	10.7	13.8	11.9	7.2	10.9	9.7
20-99 persons	27.3	28.3	27.7	27.5	28.5	27.9	29.3	37.0	34.7
100 persons and over	32.6	28.7	30.9	35.2	26.9	31.9	43.1	38.3	39.8
Don't know	2.4	1.6	2.1	2.4	1.4	2.0	*1.2	*0.6	*0.8
<b>All employees/job-holders aged 15 and over</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>3,537.3</b>	<b>2,767.4</b>	<b>6,304.7</b>	<b>1,210.7</b>	<b>799.5</b>	<b>2,010.1</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>138.7</b>	<b>200.4</b>

(a) Employees are persons aged 15 years and over who worked in their current position for wages and salary, including owner-managers. School students aged 15 to 20 and persons who worked for payment in kind are excluded. (b) Job holders are employees as defined plus persons who were away from work for 4 weeks or more, or were stood down for less than 4 weeks for reasons other than bad weather/plant breakdown or were away on workers compensation and not returning to their employer. (c) From the job-holder's current employment for a period of at least six months.

Source: Career Experience Survey

such breaks, their reasons for taking breaks, and the types of employers where breaks are most frequently recorded, vary considerably.

In February 1993, 200,400 job-holders had taken a break away from work for six months or longer since they began working for their current employer. Over two-thirds were women. Most women who had a break from work did so because of childbirth or child care reasons, while most men had a break for personal reasons. Two-thirds of all breaks were taken for less than a year and involved unpaid leave (see *Career Experience, Australia*, 6254.0).

*People employed as professionals or para-professionals comprised 43% of job-holders who took a break from work, but 21% of all employees.*

The majority of job-holders who took a break from work were aged between 25 and 44. While this age group contained 52 per cent of all employees, it represented 72 per cent of job-holders who took a break. Job-holders who worked part-time were over-represented among those who took breaks from work (29%) compared with the proportion of all employees (22%) that worked part-time, while

casual job-holders were under-represented (13% compared with 20%). As well as this, 43 per cent of job-holders who took a break were professionals or para-professionals, compared with 21 per cent of employees overall.

*People employed in the community service industry accounted for 49% of job-holders who had a break from work, but only 22% of all employees.*

The employees of certain industries were also over-represented among those who had taken a break from work. People employed in the community service industry comprised just under half (49%) of all job-holders who had a break from work, but only 22 per cent of all employees. Other industries were under-represented in terms of the proportion of employees who took breaks. The wholesale and retail trade industry, which employed 20 per cent of all employees, accounted for 8 per cent of job-holders who had taken a break from work. Similarly, the manufacturing industry employed 16 per cent of all people, but accounted for 10 per cent of those who had a break from work.

**Table 10. Employees aged 15 years and over(a): living arrangements by proportion who had an absence(b) from main job in the previous two weeks, August 1993**

Living arrangements	Males		Females		Persons	
	Absent from job	Total in category	Absent from job	Total in category	Absent from job	Total in category
	%	- '000 -	%	- '000 -	%	- '000 -
<i>Partner in couple</i>						
With children aged 0-14	17.5	1,171.3	16.6	729.9	17.2	1,901.2
Without children aged 0-14	16.4	988.5	17.5	853.9	16.9	1,842.4
<i>Lone parent</i>						
With children aged 0-14	26.4	17.9	18.4	120.3	19.5	138.2
Without children aged 0-14	*15.9	7.9	18.1	26.4	17.6	34.3
<i>Other family member</i>	14.8	674.9	16.7	559.8	15.6	1,234.8
<i>Not in a family(c)</i>	19.3	517.6	21.4	400.2	20.2	917.7
<b>All employed persons aged 15 and over</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>3,378.1</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>2,690.4</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>6,068.5</b>

(a) Includes only those persons for whom family status was determined. (b) Absences of at least three hours duration, excluding time off in lieu, flex leave, absences due to workers' compensation and rostered work arrangements. (c) Comprises lone persons, persons in group households and unrelated individuals living with a family.

Source: *Working Arrangements and Absences From Work Survey*

Taking breaks from work was also more frequently reported by those in the public rather than private sector, and in large rather than smaller organisations. The public sector represented less than 3 in 10 of all employees but about 6 in 10 job-holders who had a break from work. Similarly, though organisations that had 20 or more employees represented less than 60 per cent of all employees, they accounted for 75 per cent of all job-holders who took breaks.

## Short absences from work

Short absences from work consist of paid or unpaid leave of three hours or more within a two-week period. These absences do not include time taken off in lieu, flex leave, absences due to workers' compensation or rostered days off (see *Working Arrangements, Australia*, 6342.0).

*Similar proportions of people living in a family (17%) or non-family (20%) arrangement had taken a short absence from their job in a two-week period.*

In August 1993, 17 per cent of the 6.1 million employees had at least one such absence from their main job. This proportion was similar for both men (17%) and women (18%), and showed little variation for those living in family or

non-family arrangements (17% and 20% respectively).

Parents of 0 to 14 year-old children generally had similar proportions of absences (17% of partners and 20% of lone parents) as other parents and partners (17% and 18% respectively). The exception to this was lone fathers, where the proportion of those with 0 to 14 year-olds who had been absent was 26 per cent, compared with 16 per cent of lone fathers without children in this age group.

*A low proportion (7%) of absences from work through paid or unpaid leave arrangements are due to family reasons.*

A low proportion of paid or unpaid absences from work were for family reasons. In August 1993, 7 per cent of employees' absences from work were reported to be due to family reasons, which included child care, and care for other relatives. The likelihood of being absent from work for a family reason did, however, vary for men and women and according to living arrangements. For mothers of 0 to 14 year-old children, 18 per cent of their most recent absences were family-related, compared with 12 per cent for fathers. Among people living in other family or non-family arrangements, the proportions were 3 per cent or less for both men and women.

**Table 11. Persons(a) who had an absence(b) from work in the previous two weeks: reason for most recent absence by living arrangements, August 1993**

Reasons for absence	Parents with children aged 0-14		Other family members(c)		Not in a family(d)		Total		
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Persons
	- % -								
Family reasons	12.2	18.2	2.8	3.2	*2.2	**1.2	6.1	7.4	6.7
Personal reasons	75.7	72.0	84.3	89.3	86.5	87.5	81.5	83.7	82.5
Work reasons	6.6	5.4	7.6	3.9	5.4	5.7	6.9	4.7	5.9
Other /no particular reason	5.5	4.4	5.3	3.7	6.0	*5.5	5.5	4.2	4.9
<b>All persons who were absent from work</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>209.9</b>	<b>143.1</b>	<b>262.8</b>	<b>247.0</b>	<b>99.7</b>	<b>85.6</b>	<b>572.4</b>	<b>475.7</b>	<b>1,048.1</b>

(a) Includes only those persons for whom family status was determined. (b) Absences of at least three hours duration, excluding time off in lieu, flex leave, absences due to workers' compensation and rostered work arrangements. (c) Includes parents with children aged 15 years and over, and children aged 15 years and over. (d) Comprises lone persons, persons in a group household and unrelated individuals living with a family.

Source: *Working Arrangements and Absences From Work Survey*

Four in five absences (83%) were for personal reasons. A large proportion of these absences were for medical or health-related purposes (see *Working Arrangements, Australia, 6342.0*). A percentage of these are related to the care of a sick child, rather than a parent's own health circumstances (see Tables 23 and 24).

## Managing work and family responsibilities

The competing demands of work and family commitments have been recognised both nationally and internationally as a potential source of family stress. Balancing these dual roles can be both difficult and rewarding for those involved. It affects not only family functioning but also work performance. An increasing number of families are facing complex decisions about their standard of living and the best way to fulfil their responsibilities to their members.

## Managing work and care of children

*Lone parents with children aged 11 and under were more likely to report difficulty in managing work and care of children (44%) than those in couple families (28%).*

Finding a satisfactory balance between the demands of family life and the workplace is a difficult task for many parents. In particular, working parents with children aged 11 and under must balance the needs of both their children and employers. In 1992, while the majority (71%) of employed parents with children of these ages did not report difficulty managing work and caring for their children, 665,000 reported that they did find it difficult. A greater proportion of mothers reported difficulty (37%) than fathers (24%).

**Table 12. Employed parents with children aged 0 to 11 years: selected characteristics by proportion who reported difficulty managing work and care of children, 1992**

Selected characteristics	In couple family		In one parent family		Total	
	Reported difficulty	Total in category	Reported difficulty	Total in category	Reported difficulty	Total in category
	%	- '000 -	%	- '000 -	%	- '000 -
<b>Sex</b>						
Males	23.4	1,400.5	52.8	17.6	23.8	1,418.1
Females	36.8	789.2	42.7	85.1	37.4	874.3
<b>Whether (more) child care needed</b>						
Needs (more) care	35.9	751.7	62.6	33.4	37.0	785.2
No (more) care needed	24.3	1,438.0	35.6	69.2	24.8	1,507.3
<b>Weekly family income</b>						
\$369 and under	31.2	119.7	38.3	30.6	32.6	150.3
\$370-\$500	23.4	186.4	36.2	26.3	25.0	212.7
\$501-\$700	25.6	429.2	48.3	21.8	26.7	451.0
\$701-\$900	28.7	451.3	*56.1	9.1	29.2	460.5
\$901 and over	29.9	893.5	69.8	9.6	30.3	903.1
<b>Birthplace</b>						
Australia	27.5	1,576.6	42.4	81.0	28.2	1,657.6
Other Main English speaking country	26.1	250.6	*52.3	11.0	27.2	261.7
Non-English speaking country	33.0	362.5	*51.8	10.6	33.5	373.1
<b>All employed parents with children aged 0-11</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>2,189.7</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>102.7</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>2,292.4</b>

Source: Family Survey

***Greater proportions of lone fathers (53%) reported difficulty managing work and care of children, than lone mothers (43%).***

Differences in the characteristics of parents in couple and one parent families highlight the extra difficulties faced by lone parents in the absence of an available partner to care for their children. Overall, employed lone parents with children aged 11 and under were more likely to report difficulty in managing their work and family responsibilities (44%) than those in couple families (28%). This difference was heightened when comparing mothers and fathers in both family types. Thirty-seven per cent of partnered mothers and 23 per cent of partnered fathers reported difficulty. Greater proportions of both lone mothers (43%) and lone fathers (53%) reported difficulty than their partnered counterparts. The marked difference between the proportions of lone fathers and lone mothers who reported difficulty is consistent with a higher proportion of lone fathers who were studying and participating in the labour force than lone mothers (see *Focus on Families: Education and Employment*, 4421.0).

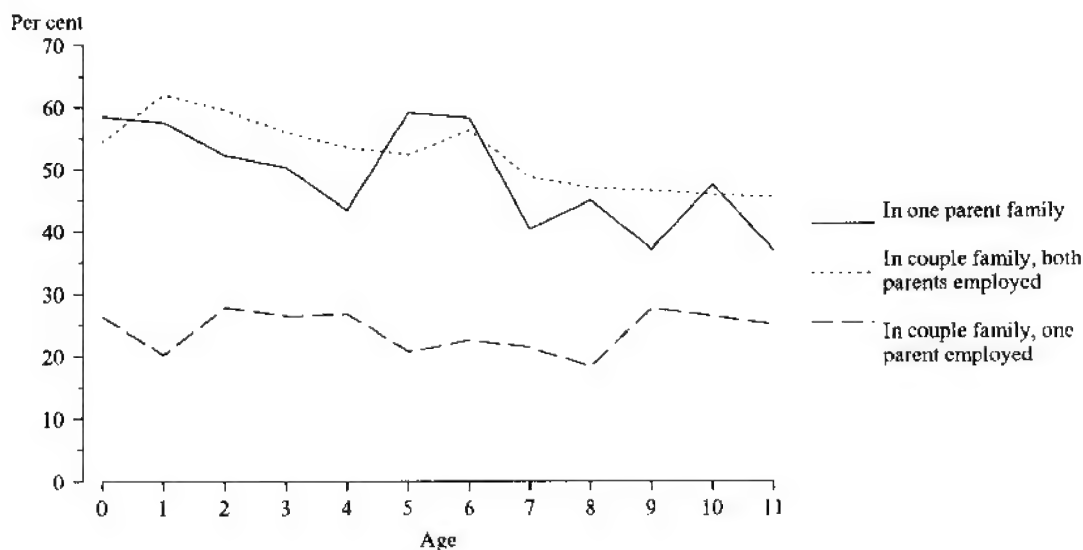
While managing work and family is more difficult for lone parents or where both parents work, difficulties were also reported among couple

families with only one parent employed. In 1992, 31 per cent of those in couple families with two working parents stated difficulty managing work and child care responsibilities. In couple families with one working parent, 22 per cent reported difficulty.

***31 per cent of parents in couple families with two working parents stated difficulty managing work and care of children compared with 22 per cent in families with one working parent.***

Difficulty in combining work and caring for children is most pronounced in families where both parents are, or a lone parent is, working and children are young. Of children aged under one in couple families with both parents employed, 54 per cent had at least one parent who reported difficulty. Proportions of those reporting difficulty were also high for parents of 1 and 2 year-olds in these families (62% and 60% respectively), but generally declined as the age of the children increased. Similar proportions of 0 to 3 year-old children had an employed lone parent who faced difficulty (59%, 58% and 52% respectively), with generally lower proportions of difficulty reported for older children. The proportion of children in

**Figure 9. Children aged 0 to 11 years in families with at least one employed parent: proportion with parent(s) who reported difficulty managing work and care of children, 1992**



Source: Family Survey



couple families with one parent employed where that parent reported difficulty, was lower than couple families with both parents working. There was little variation according to the age of the children (between 18% and 28%).

*Almost two-thirds of lone parents who needed (more) child care said they had difficulty coping with work and caring for their children.*

Access to affordable and suitable child care may impact on parents' abilities to cope with work and family responsibilities, particularly lone parents. In 1992, 37 per cent of employed parents who needed child care, or more child care than they received, found it difficult to balance their work and family commitments, compared with 25 per cent of those who stated their child care needs were met. Of lone parents in need of (more) child care, almost two-thirds (63%) indicated they had difficulty coping with work and caring for their children.

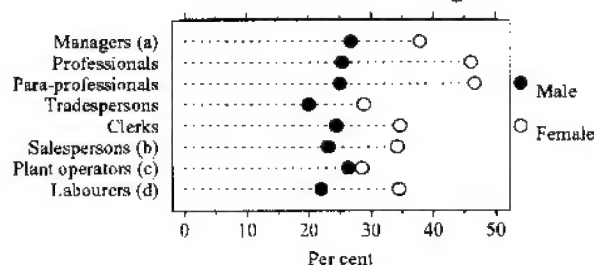
The proportion of all employed parents who reported difficulty changed little with weekly income, from 33 per cent of those with a weekly family income of \$369 and under to 30 per cent of those receiving over \$900 a week, dropping slightly for those in the middle income ranges (25% to 29%). While proportions of people reporting difficulty in couple families remained relatively constant for those with both low and high incomes, lone parents were generally more likely to state difficulty when their incomes were higher, than those with incomes in the lower ranges. Seventy per cent of those with a weekly family income of \$900 and over had difficulty, compared with 38 per cent of those with a weekly income of \$369 or less. This suggests that the affordability of child care may have less bearing on the difficulties faced by working lone parents, than the availability and flexibility of child care arrangements as hours of paid work increase.

A larger proportion of parents born in non-English speaking countries reported difficulty managing work and child care than those born elsewhere. A third (34%) of these parents had difficulty compared with 28 per cent of Australian born parents and 27 per cent of those from other main English speaking countries, which may indicate problems accessing available services. More than

half of lone parents who were not Australian born experienced difficulty, with the same proportions reporting difficulty among those from main English speaking countries as non-English speaking countries (both 52%). The higher proportion of non-Australian born lone parents who reported difficulty may be due to fewer family support networks in Australia.

Difficulty managing work and care of children varies more according to the occupation of mothers than of fathers. The proportions of mothers reporting difficulty managing work and family responsibilities were consistently higher than for fathers, with the disparity being greatest in the professional and para-professional occupations (46% compared with 25%). Among mothers, there was also a greater range in the proportions reporting difficulty than there was for fathers. Twenty-nine per cent of mothers who worked as plant and machine operators/drivers, and tradespersons reported difficulty, compared with 47 per cent of mothers who were in professional and para-professional occupations. Among fathers, the proportions who reported difficulty ranged from 20 per cent of tradespersons to 27 per cent of managers and administrators.

**Figure 10. Parents with children aged 0 to 11 years: proportion reporting difficulty managing work and care of children by occupation, 1992**



(a) Managers and administrators. (b) Salespersons and personal service workers. (c) Plant and machine operators and drivers. (d) Labourers and related workers.

Source: Family Survey

## Reasons for experiencing difficulty managing work and care of children

Parents can indicate a variety of reasons for experiencing difficulty in balancing their work and child care responsibilities. These include lack of flexibility in the work environment, termed 'work'

reasons, or factors relating to arrangements made to care for the children, termed 'family' reasons.

In 1992, parents of 0 to 11 year-olds were more likely to report work reasons than family reasons for the difficulties they had managing work and caring for their children, although this differed among family types. Just over half (52%) of parents who reported difficulties, indicated that the main reason for those difficulties was work-related. The main reason given was that work hours were too long, accounting for over one-third of parents, followed by inflexibility of work hours (18%). Twenty-seven per cent of parents reported family reasons for their difficulty, including the cost or suitability/availability of child care (both 8%), and caring for sick children (6%). Thirteen per cent of parents could not identify a particular reason as to why they experienced difficulty.

*The main reason given by parents who had difficulty managing work and care of children was that work hours were too long (34%).*

In couple and one parent families, the proportion nominating family reasons was greater if both parents or the lone parent were working. Forty-two per cent of lone parents who were employed, and 30 per cent of parents in couple families where both parents were employed, stated a family reason as the main difficulty they had managing work and care of children, with reasons associated with the cost and suitability/availability of child care most frequently stated. This compared with 14 per cent of parents stating family reasons in couple families with only one parent employed.

Access to affordable, appropriate child care is important for the functioning of families with young children, particularly those where each parent is in paid work. The proportion of partners in couple families with one employed parent who reported difficulty because of the cost or suitability/availability of child care was 6 per cent. This was higher among partners in couple families in which both parents worked (18%), and higher again among lone parents (27%).

**Table 13. Employed parents with children aged 0 to 11 years(a), who reported difficulty managing work and care of children: main difficulty reported, 1992**

Main difficulty	Lone parent	Couple		Total
		Both employed	One employed	
-%				
Family reasons				
Caring for sick child(ren)	*8.5	6.7	*4.3	6.3
Cost of care	*13.9	8.5	*5.2	8.2
No suitable or available care	*13.0	9.6	**0.9	8.0
Transport(b)	*6.2	5.3	*3.6	5.0
Total	41.6	30.1	14.0	27.4
Work reasons				
Work hours too long	20.4	31.8	43.9	33.6
Work hours not flexible enough	19.0	18.3	18.4	18.4
Total	39.5	50.1	62.3	52.0
No particular reason	*14.3	12.6	15.5	13.4
Other	*4.8	7.2	8.2	7.3
All parents				
with difficulty	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number ('000)	46.1	478.0	141.9	666.0
Did not report				
difficulty ('000)	56.6	1,064.9	505.0	1,626.4
All employed				
parents with				
children aged				
0-11 years ('000)	102.7	1,542.9	646.9	2,292.4

(a) Excludes a small proportion of parents that did not state whether they had difficulty. (b) Comprises transport to and/or from school and/or child care.

Source: Family Survey

## Parents in full-time and part-time work

Mothers who work full-time are more likely to report difficulty managing their work and child care responsibilities than other parents. Of full-time employed mothers of 0 to 11 year-olds, almost half reported difficulty (46%), compared with 32 per cent of part-time mothers. Full-time and part-time employed fathers of children of these ages were both less likely to report difficulty (24% and 21% respectively).



**Table 14. Employed parents with children aged 0 to 11 years: whether reported difficulty managing work and care of children by main difficulty reported by employment status, 1992**

Whether reported difficulty and main difficulty reported	Male			Female			Total persons
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
	- % -						
<i>Main difficulty</i>							
Family reasons	15.3	*23.2	15.6	34.1	44.3	39.6	27.4
Work reasons	66.9	46.0	66.1	49.7	26.8	37.3	51.9
No particular reason	11.3	*14.9	11.5	10.0	19.9	15.4	13.4
Other	6.5	*15.8	6.9	6.2	9.0	7.7	7.3
<b>All parents with difficulty</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>325.4</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>337.7</b>	<b>149.0</b>	<b>177.8</b>	<b>326.7</b>	<b>664.4</b>
<i>Did not report difficulty ('000)</i>	<i>1,018.3</i>	<i>46.5</i>	<i>1,064.8</i>	<i>169.3</i>	<i>375.0</i>	<i>544.3</i>	<i>1,609.1</i>
<b>All employed parents with children aged 0-11 ('000)</b>	<b>1,358.7</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>1,418.1</b>	<b>320.5</b>	<b>553.8</b>	<b>874.3</b>	<b>2,292.4</b>

Source: Family Survey

The main difficulty experienced by full-time employed parents differed from that of part-time employed parents. About 62 per cent of parents who worked full-time reported a work reason as the main difficulty they experienced, while parents who worked part-time most frequently nominated a family reason (43%). However, part-time employed fathers with children aged 11 and under were still twice as likely to state a work reason for their difficulty (46%) as a family reason (23%).

*More than half of couple families where both parents worked full-time had at least one parent who reported difficulty managing work and care of children.*

In couples where both parents work, the length of time spent at work influences the proportions of parents experiencing difficulty managing work and care of their child or children. In 1992, over 700,000 couple families with children aged 11 and under had both parents in paid employment. Where both parents worked full-time, 56 per cent of families had at least one parent who reported difficulty. This compared with 45 per cent of couple families where one parent worked full-time and the other part-time, and 35 per cent of couple families in which both parents worked part-time.

*In 15 per cent of couple families where two parents worked, both reported difficulty managing work and care of their children.*

In almost 105,000 couple families, both parents reported difficulty managing work and child care, which represented 15 per cent of couple families with children aged 11 and under where both parents worked. The proportion of couple families with a full-time and a part-time working parent who both reported difficulty, was 12 per cent. The proportion was higher in couple families in which both parents worked part-time (19%), and higher again in couple families in which both parents worked full-time (21%).

## Managing work and care of other family members

Parents comprise the largest group of employed family carers but are by no means the only ones who provide care. Many employed people provide help to family members who are older, or have a disability or long-term illness. In 1992, about 730,000 employed people were providing personal care/home help to family members for

**Table 15. Couple families with children aged 0 to 11 years and both parents employed: employment status of parents by whether parents reported difficulty managing work and care of children, 1992**

Employment status of parents	Both parents reported difficulty	One parent reported difficulty	Neither parent reported difficulty	Total
		- % -		- '000 -
Both parents employed full-time	20.8	35.1	44.1	231.7
One parent employed full-time, one parent employed part-time	11.7	33.3	54.9	452.9
Both parents employed part-time	*18.8	*16.7	64.5	18.1
<b>All couple families with both parents employed</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>51.6</b>	<b>702.6</b>

(a) Excludes a small proportion of families where parents did not state whether they experienced difficulty managing work and child care.

Source: Family Survey

these reasons. It must also be recognised that a percentage of providers of care to such relatives carry multiple caring responsibilities. Of all employed providers of personal care/home help, it is estimated that a third also have children aged 11 and under. This issue will be examined in more detail in *Focus on Families: Caring in Families* (4423.0).

Of all employed providers of personal care/home help, 27 per cent reported difficulty managing work and providing such care. A higher proportion of female (35%) than male providers of

care (21%) reported difficulty, which was consistent across all age groups. For both men and women, the proportions who reported difficulty peaked for those in the 35 to 44 year age group (26% and 47% respectively).

A greater proportion of overseas born providers of personal care/home help reported difficulty managing their work and care responsibilities than those born in Australia. Thirty-four per cent of carers from other main English speaking countries and 31 per cent of those from non-English speaking countries reported difficulty, compared

**Table 16. Employed providers of personal care/home help(a): selected characteristics by proportion who reported difficulty managing work and providing care, 1992**

Selected characteristics	Males		Females		Persons	
	Reported difficulty	Total in category	Reported difficulty	Total in category	Reported difficulty	Total in category
	%	- '000 -	%	- '000 -	%	- '000 -
<b>Age</b>						
15-24	*8.9	42.7	20.5	49.7	15.1	92.4
25-34	20.2	98.3	26.9	66.5	22.9	164.8
35-44	25.6	145.6	46.8	97.6	34.1	243.2
45-54	20.9	94.5	34.0	81.1	27.0	175.6
55 and over	*13.7	33.0	42.6	22.0	25.3	54.9
<b>Birthplace</b>						
Australia	19.5	333.9	33.5	258.5	25.6	592.4
Other Main English speaking country	*22.9	26.3	43.7	28.5	33.7	54.8
Non-English speaking country	25.9	53.8	39.2	29.8	30.6	83.7
<b>All employed providers of personal care/home help</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>414.0</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>316.8</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>730.9</b>

(a) To family members because of a long-term illness, disability, or old age.

Source: Family Survey

with 26 per cent of Australian born providers of care. There were similar variations in the proportions of male and female providers of care in each of these birthplace groups.

## Reasons for experiencing difficulty managing work and care of other family members

As with those caring for children, people who were providers of care to family members because of their disability, age or long-term illness were more likely to state work reasons than family reasons for the difficulties they faced managing work and personal care/home help. Almost half (48%) of providers of personal care/home help who reported difficulty, said that the reason was work-related, while 36 per cent stated a family reason. Over a third (35%) of all those who reported difficulty said this was because their work hours were too long.

## Providers of personal care/home help in full-time and part-time work

As for mothers who work full-time, providers of personal care/home help are more likely to report difficulty managing their work and family responsibilities than other providers. Of female

providers who worked full-time, 38 per cent reported difficulty, compared with a third of providers who worked part-time. Full-time employed male providers were also less likely to report difficulty (22%) than male providers who worked part-time (11%).

The main difficulty that those in full-time work had in managing work and care of their relatives was that work hours were too long (46% for both men and women). Those in part-time work were most likely to state that their difficulty related to the particular needs of that relative (36% among male providers and 37% among female providers).

## Reduced working hours of principal carers

*In 1993, a majority of employed principal carers (84%) continued to work their usual hours after taking on their caring role.*

Caring responsibilities may be especially demanding for employed people who are providing the most informal help to someone because of their disability. In 1993, of the 540,000 people who were principal carers of people with disabilities, 30 per cent were employed. A majority

**Table 17. Employed providers of personal care/home help who reported difficulty managing work and providing care(a): main reason for difficulty by employment status, 1992**

Main reason for difficulty	Males			Females			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
- % -							
Family reasons							
Needs of family member	19.2	*35.8	20.0	20.6	37.2	28.2	24.6
Travel/distance to family member	12.0	**15.1	12.1	*8.3	*12.1	10.0	10.9
Total	31.2	*50.9	32.1	28.9	49.3	38.3	35.6
Work reasons							
Work hours too long	45.9	**15.2	44.5	45.7	*5.3	27.2	34.7
Work hours not flexible enough	10.6	**10.0	10.6	13.8	18.8	16.1	13.7
Total	56.5	*25.1	55.0	59.5	24.1	43.2	48.4
Other/no particular reason	12.3	**24.0	12.8	*11.6	26.7	18.5	16.1
All employed providers of personal care/home help with difficulty							
Number ('000)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	81.3	*3.9	85.2	59.8	50.8	110.6	195.8
All employed providers of personal care/home help ('000)							
	376.1	36.7	414.0	159.4	156.3	316.9	730.9

(a) To family members because of long-term illness, disability or old age.

Source: Family Survey

of employed principal carers (84%) continued to work their usual hours after taking on the caring role. Women (15%) were slightly more likely to reduce their working hours than men (13%). While there were roughly equal proportions of principal carers who reduced their hours in the 25 to 44 year (47%) and 45 to 64 year (51%) age ranges, women aged 25 to 44 were more likely to do so (50%) than men (40%).

**Table 18. Employed principal carers(a): whether reduced working hours, 1993**

Whether reduced hours and age	Males	Females	Persons
- % -			
<i>Reduced hours</i>			
Age-			
25-44	*40.4	50.4	47.3
45-64	54.6	49.6	51.1
65 and over	**5.0	**	**1.6
<b>All who reduced hours</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>31.6</b>
<i>Did not reduce hours ('000)</i>	62.3	121.5	183.8
<i>Not stated ('000)</i>	*2.3	**1.7	*3.9
<b>All employed principal carers ('000)</b>	<b>74.4</b>	<b>144.9</b>	<b>219.3</b>

(a) Of persons with a disability who require assistance with self-care, mobility or verbal communication. Five per cent were caring for non-family members.

Source: Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers

## Family and workplace interaction

The home and the workplace are not discrete environments. For many people, work does not finish when they leave the workplace - it is brought home. Similarly, family responsibilities do not cease during paid work hours, and time may be needed to attend to family matters. Evidence of the overlap between work and family life can be seen in the growth of home-based employment and the demand for leave for family purposes. The importance of transport and communication between work and home, also indicates the interactive nature of these two environments.

## Work time at home

**Table 19. Employed persons aged 15 years and over: proportion who brought work home(a) by living arrangements, 1992**

Sex and living arrangements	Brought work home	Total in category
	- % -	- '000 -
<i>Males</i>		
Partner in couple-		
With children aged 0-14	13.2	1620.0
Without children aged 0-14	11.7	1,406.7
Lone parent	**12.4	45.7
Other family member	3.3	794.2
Not in a family(b)	9.3	527.1
<b>All employed males</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>4,393.6</b>
<i>Females</i>		
Partner in couple-		
With children aged 0-14	9.0	986.8
Without children aged 0-14	7.9	1,059.5
Lone parent	*10.9	210.8
Other family member	*2.6	525.8
Not in a family(b)	8.7	428.0
<b>All employed females</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>3,210.9</b>
<i>Persons</i>		
Partner in couple-		
With children aged 0-14	11.6	2,606.8
Without children aged 0-14	10.1	2,466.2
Lone parent	11.2	256.5
Other family member	3.0	1,319.9
Not in a family(b)	9.0	955.1
<b>All employed persons</b>	<b>9.3-</b>	<b>7,604.5</b>

(a) Excludes persons who worked mainly from home. Includes activity items *work brought home* and *work-related communication*.

(b) Comprises lone persons, persons in group households and unrelated individuals living with a family.

Source: Time Use Survey

On an average day, 9 per cent of employed people aged 15 years and over brought work home. This proportion did not include those whose paid work was mostly done from home.

Men are slightly more likely to bring work home than women. Ten per cent of employed men reported they undertook work-related activities at home on an average day, compared with 8 per cent of employed women.

The proportion of parents who bring work home is higher than that of other workers. Thirteen per cent of employed fathers with children aged 0 to 14 brought work home on an average day, as did 9 per cent of employed mothers.

*On an average day in 1992, 9% of employed people spent time on work-related tasks at home. The average time they spent was 73 minutes.*

The average time spent on work brought home by was 73 minutes a day. While parents were more likely to bring work home than other workers, they were generally less likely to spend as much time as others on the work they brought home. Couples with 0 to 14 year-old children spent an average of 68 minutes and lone fathers spent an average of 66 minutes per day on work brought home. However, on average, lone mothers spent the most time of all groups on work they brought home (90 minutes). Partnered women without 0 to 14 year-old children averaged a similar amount of time (89 minutes) as lone mothers, as did men who did not live with a family (87 minutes).

Other family members, which include a high proportion of young adults, were least likely to bring work home and spent the least amount of time when they did. They are likely to be in the early stages of career formation or development.

**Table 20. Employed persons aged 15 years and over(a) who brought work home: average time spent on work brought home by living arrangements, 1992**

Living arrangements	Males	Females	Persons
	- minutes per day -		
Partner in couple			
With children aged 0-14	73	54	68
Without children aged 0-14	76	89	81
Lone parent	66	90	85
Other family member	55	38	49
Not in a family(b)	87	65	78
<b>All employed persons who brought work home</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>73</b>

(a) Excludes persons who worked mainly from home. Includes activity items work brought home and work-related communication.

(b) Comprises lone persons, persons in group households and unrelated individuals living with a family.

Source: Time Use Survey

## Home-based employment

The option of home-based work has been recognised as a benefit to those with family responsibilities (McCreadie, 1994), and is reflected in the growth of this form of employment in recent years. Between 1989 and 1992, the number of people who worked from home in their main job, excluding farmers and farm workers, increased by 18 per cent. This increase was 6 times the increase in the total number of employed persons over this period (3%) (see *Persons Employed at Home, Australia*, 6275.0).

*Over half a million people (8% of all employed people) did most of their paid work at home.*

In 1992, over half a million people reported that their paid work was done mostly at home, accounting for 8 per cent of all employed people.

Ten per cent of employed women and 6 per cent of employed men were engaged in home-based employment.

The majority of women who worked mostly from home were partners in couple families (88%). Over half were mothers with 0 to 14 year-old children (54%) and 34 per cent were partnered but without children in this age group. The proportions of partnered men who worked from home were 37 per cent for those with 0 to 14 year-olds and 41 per cent for those without 0 to 14 year-olds. Eighteen per cent of the total number of employed partnered mothers of 0 to 14 year old children, worked from home, compared with 6 per cent of partnered fathers.

## Time spent on home-based work and household work

The average time spent by men on both labour force and household activities is not greatly affected by whether or not they work from home. In 1992, men in home-based employment spent 44 hours per week on labour force activities while all employed men spent an average of 46 hours. Men in home-based employment spent an average of 17 hours per week on household activities while all employed men averaged 15 hours per week.

**Table 21. Employed persons aged 15 years and over: average time spent on labour force and unpaid household(a) activities by place of employment and living arrangements, 1992**

Place of employment and living arrangements	Males				Females			
	Labour force	Household	Total	Total in category	Labour force	Household	Total	Total in category
	- hours per week -			- '000 -	- hours per week -			- '000 -
<i>Persons in home-based employment</i>								
Partner in couple-								
With children aged 0-14	51.9	16.8	68.7	90.1	13.2	50.6	63.8	179.9
Without children aged 0-14	38.4	17.3	55.7	100.0	16.6	38.2	54.7	115.1
Lone parent	52.4	15.9	68.1	**5.0	31.2	35.7	66.9	*14.2
Other family member	54.1	16.1	70.2	*19.1	17.9	26.6	44.5	*13.3
Not in a family(b)	29.8	17.5	47.3	30.6	10.3	28.9	39.2	*12.4
<b>All employed persons in home-based employment</b>	<b>43.8</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>60.8</b>	<b>244.8</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>334.8</b>
<i>All employed persons</i>								
Partner in couple-								
With children aged 0-14	47.7	18.3	66.0	1,620.0	22.5	43.6	66.2	986.6
Without children aged 0-14	46.6	15.2	61.8	1,406.7	32.6	27.2	59.7	1,059.5
Lone parent	52.6	14.4	67.0	45.7	33.3	30.4	63.7	210.8
Other family member	38.6	8.2	46.7	794.2	30.2	13.2	43.4	525.8
Not in a family(b)	46.0	13.2	59.2	527.1	37.7	16.7	54.4	428.0
<b>All employed persons</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>60.3</b>	<b>4,393.6</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>3,210.9</b>

(a) Includes domestic, child care and purchasing activities. (b) Comprises lone parents, persons in group households and unrelated individuals living with a family

Source: Time Use Survey

*Time spent by men on labour force and household tasks is not greatly affected by whether or not they work from home.*

However, on average, women in home-based employment spent less time on labour force activities and more time on household activities than employed women. In 1992, women in home-based employment spent half the average amount of time on labour force activities (15 hours per week), compared with all employed women (30 hours per week). The average time spent on household activities by women in home-based employment was 44 hours per week, whereas all employed women spent 29 hours per week.

For women, working from home suggests a different emphasis on the amount of time spent in household versus labour force activities than people engaged in other forms of employment. Living arrangements can also impact on the distribution of time spent on these activities.

*Partnered mothers of young children, who worked at home, spent an average of 51 hours per week on household activities and 13 hours on labour force activities.*

Partnered mothers of 0 to 14 year-old children who worked from home spent more time on household activities (51 hours per week) than all employed women with children of these ages (44 hours per week), while averaging substantially less time on labour force activities (13 hours compared with 23 hours per week). For partnered fathers of 0 to 14 year-olds who worked from home, these time use patterns were the reverse of partnered mothers who worked from home (17 hours per week spent on household activities and 52 hours per week on labour force activities) and differed little from the hours of all employed men with children of these ages (18 and 48 hours per week respectively).

In contrast, lone mothers engaged in home-based employment had a more even distribution between household and labour force activities (36 hours and 31 hours respectively). The combined number of hours spent on these tasks for lone mothers in home-based employment was 67 hours per week, while those in all forms of employment averaged 64 hours per week.

## Why people work from home

The reasons for beginning to work from home differ between men and women. The most frequently-stated reasons that women gave for working from home related to the care of children (25%) and to the operation of their own or a family business (24%). Other reasons they gave were to help their spouse (16%) and to avoid or reduce office costs (12%).

More than half of men who worked from home did so either to avoid or reduce office costs (31%) or to operate their own or a family business (21%). Nine per cent of men began working from home because no other work was available and 6 per cent because they had reached retirement age.

*Most mothers who work from home do so for family reasons (53%).  
Most fathers work from home for work reasons (72%).*

The reasons women began working from home, are influenced by whether or not a young child is present in the household. In 1992, 53 per cent of female home-based workers with 0 to 14 year-old children began working from home in their main job for family reasons. For these mothers, the major family reason for working from home was the care of children (38%). Although lower than for mothers of 0 to 14 year-olds, the proportion of other partnered women who started working at home for family reasons was still relatively high (23%). The major family reason they gave for working at home was to help their spouse (17%).

Men tended to work from home for reasons other than family reasons. Three per cent of fathers of 0 to 14 year-old children who worked from home, did so for family reasons, compared with 1 per cent of those without children in this age group. Of fathers with 0 to 14 year-olds who worked from

**Table 22. Persons employed at home in their main job(a)(b): main reason began working at home by whether had children aged 0 to 14 years, March 1992**

Main reason began working at home	Males			Females			Total
	With children aged 0-14	Without children aged 0-14	Total	With children aged 0-14	Without children aged 0-14	Total	
	- % -						
<i>Work reasons</i>							
Wanted office at home/no overheads/no rent	33.4	29.5	30.8	9.4	15.1	11.8	17.6
Did not want to travel to work	*3.6	**0.9	**1.8	*0.9	*4.1	*2.2	2.1
Flexible working hours	*4.8	*5.0	*4.9	5.2	5.7	5.4	5.2
No other work available	*5.5	11.2	*9.2	*2.4	7.1	*4.3	5.8
To open/operate own/family business with spouse	25.1	19.6	21.4	21.4	28.4	24.3	23.4
<i>Total</i>	72.4	66.2	68.2	39.3	60.4	48.0	54.1
<i>Family reasons</i>							
Children too young/preferred to look after children	*3.0	**0.2	**1.2	38.2	6.4	25.0	17.7
To help spouse	**	**1.0	**0.7	14.9	16.7	15.7	11.1
<i>Total</i>	*3.0	**7.2	**1.8	53.1	23.1	40.7	28.8
Reached retirement age	**0.9	8.7	*6.0	**	*1.3	**0.5	2.2
Other	23.8	23.9	23.9	7.9	15.3	10.9	14.9
<b>All persons employed at home</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>80.6</b>	<b>107.0</b>	<b>75.6</b>	<b>182.6</b>	<b>263.2</b>

(a) Excludes persons for whom family status was not determined. (b) Excludes farmers and persons who work on farms.

Source: Persons Employed At Home Survey



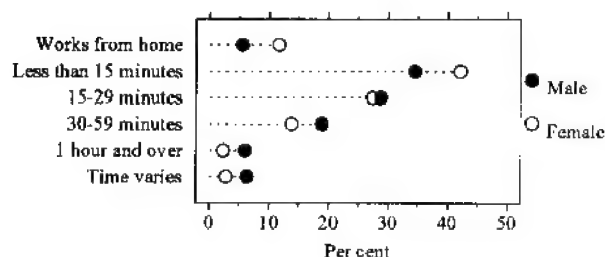
home, almost three-quarters did so for a work-related reason, compared with two-thirds of men who did not have a child aged 14 and under.

## Transport between home and work

Time spent travelling to and from work has the potential to significantly reduce time that family members have together. The cost of transport may also affect family well-being. For people with child care or other family responsibilities, being close to work and community services and having convenient access to affordable transport can help to balance work and family responsibilities.

On average, employed women who were caring for children or other relatives spent less time travelling to work than their male counterparts. In 1992, 54 per cent of these women either worked from home or lived within fifteen minutes of work, compared with 40 per cent of men. The proportion of men (25%) who travelled 30 minutes or more to work was higher than that for women (16%).

**Figure 11. Employed parents of children aged 0 to 11 years and employed providers of personal care/home help: usual time taken to travel to work, 1992**



Source: Family Survey

## Workplace options

An Australian Institute of Family Studies survey of employer views on work and family found that, on the whole, corporate values '...were still based on the premise that work and family lives were separate worlds' (Wolcott, 1991). Employers must consider how to maintain efficient and competitive work practices, as well as how to incorporate a flexible environment in which family

responsibilities are taken into account. These aspects are sometimes seen as mutually exclusive domains, although there is a growing recognition by employers that a flexible working environment may contribute to economic productivity and employee job satisfaction (Cass, 1994).

Options for the functioning of the workplace in relation to family issues are examined in this section. These include what families have or would like to have available to care for sick children, the use of flexible work arrangements to care for children, leave arrangements of those caring for people with disabilities and employer assistance with child care.

## Time off work to care for sick children

For families with both parents employed or an employed lone parent, when a child is sick and needs time off school or regular day care, alternative arrangements to care for that child must be made. In many cases this involves a parent taking time off work. In the six months to June 1993, there were 470,000 families in which both parents or the lone parent were employed and where children aged 11 and under were absent from school or formal care due to sickness.

Mothers in couple families with both parents employed are more than twice as likely than the fathers in such families to take time off work to care for a sick child. In the six months to June 1993, there were 410,300 couple families with two employed parents where children were unable to attend school or formal care due to sickness. Over a third (36%) of mothers took leave from work to care for their children, compared with 16 per cent of fathers. Of the couples who had sick children, 42 per cent had one or both parents take time off work to care for their children.

Mothers in couple families with both parents employed are also more likely than fathers to take unpaid leave to care for a sick child. Of mothers who took leave, 34 per cent took unpaid leave, compared with 19 per cent of fathers. This difference was greater for couple families where the father worked full-time and the mother worked part-time. In such families, 16 per cent of fathers who took leave, took unpaid leave, compared with 45 per cent of mothers. There was little difference between mothers and fathers when both worked full-time.



**Table 23. Couple families with both parents employed, and children aged 0 to 11 years who were absent(a); whether parent(s) took time off work to care for sick child(ren) by selected characteristics(b), June 1993**

Whether took time off and type of leave taken	Male			Total
	Both full-time	full-time /female part-time	Other	
	-%-			
<i>Father took time off</i>				
Unpaid leave(c)	19.3	15.8	*58.0	18.9
Flex/rostered day off	20.3	24.4	**8.9	21.8
Family/special	17.9	13.8	**4.5	15.6
Sick	25.1	29.2	**	26.2
Recreation	*10.1	*9.6	**	9.6
Other	**0.7	**	**	**0.4
No formal leave	17.4	*13.0	*28.5	15.7
<b>Total fathers who took time off</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>33.7</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>*2.0</b>	<b>65.5</b>
<i>Father did not take time off ('000)</i>	112.9	220.6	11.3	344.8
<i>Mother took time off</i>				
Unpaid leave(c)	20.8	45.4	*25.3	33.8
Flex/rostered day off	15.7	17.6	*25.0	16.9
Family/special	20.3	5.9	*21.4	12.8
Sick	38.0	22.0	**16.6	29.1
Recreation	9.9	*4.1	**5.2	6.8
Other	**	**	**	**
No formal leave	7.2	12.6	*18.0	10.3
<b>Total mothers who took time off</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>67.5</b>	<b>77.6</b>	<b>*3.3</b>	<b>148.3</b>
<i>Mother did not take time off ('000)</i>	79.1	172.9	10.0	261.9
<i>Either parent took time off ('000)</i>	78.7	90.8	*4.1	173.5
<i>Neither parent took time off ('000)</i>	67.9	159.7	9.1	236.7
<b>All couple families with both parents employed and children who were absent ('000)</b>	<b>146.6</b>	<b>250.4</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>410.3</b>

(a) From school or child care due to illness. (b) More than one type of leave could be taken and therefore components do not add to totals. (c) Includes leave without pay.

Source: Child Care Survey

A slightly higher proportion of families with an employed lone parent than couple families with both parents employed had a parent who took time off work to care for a sick child (46%

compared with 42%). Lone parents who worked full-time were more likely to take time off (53%) than those who worked part-time (40%). Part-timers (46%) were more likely than those working full-time (32%) to have taken unpaid leave. The higher proportion of unpaid leave reflects the fact that part-time workers are more likely to be casual workers with less access to paid leave.

**Table 24. One parent families with parent employed, and children aged 0 to 11 years who were absent(a); whether parent took time off work to care for sick child(ren) by selected characteristics(b), June 1993**

Whether took time off and type of leave taken	Full-time	Part-time	Total
	-%-		
<i>Parent took time off</i>			
Unpaid leave(c)	32.3	45.9	38.5
Flex/rostered day off	*15.6	*13.0	14.4
Family/special leave	*18.0	*6.6	*12.8
Sick leave	34.6	*19.7	27.8
Recreation leave	*9.5	*10.3	*9.9
No formal leave	*4.9	*7.9	*6.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>28.9</b>
<i>Parent did not take time off ('000)</i>	14.1	20.0	34.1
<b>All one parent families with employed parent and children who were absent ('000)</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>63.0</b>

(a) From school or child care due to illness. (b) More than one type of leave could be taken and therefore components do not add to totals. (c) Includes leave without pay.

Source: Child Care Survey

## Other arrangements to care for sick children

Parents do not always take time off work when a child is sick. It is more often the case that a sick child is cared for in some other way. Leaving care to an older brother or sister, taking the sick child to work or getting family or friends to help out, are common arrangements. Commitment to work, lack of paid leave or fear of losing a job may all be reasons which make taking time off work impractical or inappropriate. In addition, the hours or flexibility of some jobs may be such that parents are able to look after their sick child themselves, without this affecting their work hours.

*In 62% of one parent families and 48% of couple families in which a child was sick, arrangements other than time off work were used to care for the child.*

In half of families where a child was sick, arrangements other than a parent taking time off work was used. This was more often the case in one parent families (62%) than in couple families (48%).

Lone parents are more likely to rely on family and friends to care for a sick child than parents in couple families. For families where an arrangement other than a parent taking time off

work was used to care for a sick child, the most common type of arrangement was care by a relative other than a sibling (54%). This arrangement was more likely in one parent families (64%) than in couple families (52%). Lone parents were also more likely to use arrangements in which sick children looked after themselves, or were cared for by a sibling or a non-relative, although numbers in each case are small. Parents in couple families were more likely to work from home or to take the child to work with them, than those in one parent families (35% compared with 16%).

## Preferred care arrangements

A child's sickness is not usually something that parents can predict and prepare for in advance. For families where two parents or a lone parent are employed, arranging suitable care by a third person or taking time off work at short notice may be particularly difficult. Arrangements which enable employed parents to react quickly and flexibly to these situations assist family life.

Employed mothers may not have access to the care options they would prefer when their children are sick. In the six months to June 1993, there were 572,300 children with an employed lone parent or two employed parents who were absent from school or formal care due to sickness, for whom a mother reported care arrangements. While the majority (58%) had mothers who were happy with their current arrangements, 42 per cent had mothers who would have preferred a care arrangement other than the one that was used. Of the children whose mothers took time off work only, over half (53%) had a mother who preferred an alternative care arrangement. About a third of the children had a mother who did not take any time off work and preferred an alternative care arrangement.

For 77 per cent of the children who were not in the most preferred care arrangement, their mothers would have liked an arrangement which included paid family leave; 23 per cent would have preferred sick care facilities at a school or child care centre; and 22 per cent, a person from a sick care agency in the child's home.

**Table 25. Families with parent(s)(a) employed and children aged 0 to 11 years who were absent(b): whether used arrangements other than time off work to care for sick child(ren) by selected characteristics(c), June 1993**

Whether used arrangements and type of arrangements	Family type		Total
	Couple	One parent	
	-%-		
<i>Arrangements used</i>			
Child looked after self	2.6	*6.7	3.3
Child cared for by sibling	3.6	*7.0	4.2
Child cared for by other relative	51.8	64.3	53.9
Child cared for by other person	15.6	20.9	16.5
Child taken to work	11.1	*9.1	10.8
Worked at home	23.9	*6.6	21.0
Other	3.5	*2.2	3.3
<b>Total arrangements</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>196.4</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>235.4</b>
<i>Did not use these arrangements ('000)</i>	213.9	23.9	237.8
<b>All families with employed parent(s) and children who were absent ('000)</b>	<b>410.3</b>	<b>63.0</b>	<b>473.2</b>

(a) Comprises employed one parent families and couple families with both parents employed. (b) From school or child care due to illness. (c) Families may use more than one type of arrangement and therefore components do not add to totals.

Source: Child Care Survey

**Table 26. Children aged 0 to 11 years in families with employed parent(s)(a): arrangements used by mother to care for sick child(ren) by mothers' preferred arrangement, June 1993**

Arrangements used	Arrangement preferred by mother(b)					Total	Mother prefers current arrangement	Total
	Paid family leave	Sick care facilities by school or centre	Family Day Care	Person from sick care agency in own home	Other			
			- % -			- '000 -	- '000 -	- '000 -
<i>Time off work only</i>								
Unpaid leave	75.7	19.7	*6.8	19.1	**0.9	25.1	22.5	47.6
Family/special leave	84.3	*27.7	*17.7	*17.5	**0.8	9.4	5.4	14.8
Other paid leave	88.5	14.8	14.1	18.7	*3.7	41.8	28.5	70.3
No formal leave	48.7	*20.7	*31.5	*29.4	**6.8	6.9	10.0	16.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>80.1</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>*2.4</b>	<b>72.5</b>	<b>63.3</b>	<b>135.8</b>
<i>Time off work and other arrangements</i>	84.5	25.0	10.5	24.1	**1.0	55.6	30.8	86.3
<i>Other arrangements only</i>	75.6	27.3	8.5	24.1	*1.2	68.7	118.5	187.2
<i>Neither time off work nor other arrangements</i>	65.9	21.2	*7.4	17.9	*4.7	45.2	117.7	162.9
<b>All children aged 0-11 in families with parent(s) employed</b>	<b>77.2</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>242.0</b>	<b>330.3</b>	<b>572.3</b>

(a) Comprises children in couple families with both parents employed and employed lone mother families. Children in employed lone father families and in couple families where the father's preferences were collected instead of the mother's are excluded. (b) Components do not add to total as mothers may have more than one preference.

Source: Child Care Survey

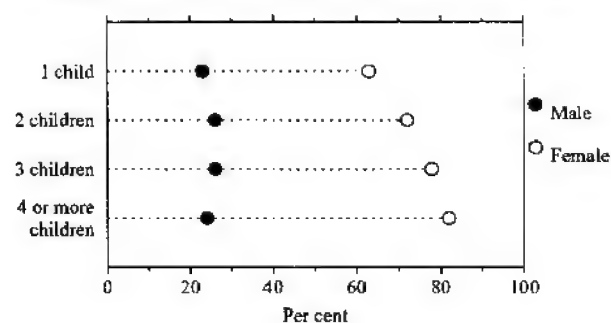
## Flexible working arrangements

Employed mothers are almost three times as likely as employed fathers to use some form of flexible working arrangement to care for their children. In 68 per cent of families with employed mothers of children aged 11 and under, mothers used a flexible work arrangement to care for children. In families with employed fathers, a quarter (24%) of fathers used such an arrangement.

The pattern of flexible work options differed for fathers and mothers. Although the use of flexible working hours was the most frequently reported option for both fathers and mothers, fathers (64%) were more likely to use this than mothers (44%). About a quarter of both men and women worked at home so they could also care for their children, but a much greater proportion of mothers (41%) than fathers (3%) chose permanent part-time work. Twice the proportion of fathers (19%) as mothers (10%) worked shiftwork so that they could care for their children.

The proportion of working mothers who used flexible work arrangements to help in the care of their children increased as the number of children in the family increased. The proportions ranged from 63 per cent of mothers with one child to 82 per cent of mothers with four or more children. However, the proportion of fathers who used some form of flexible working arrangement did not increase with the number of children.

**Figure 12. Families with children aged 0 to 11 years and at least one employed parent: number of children in family by proportion where parent used flexible work arrangements to care for child(ren), June 1993**



Source: Child Care Survey

**Table 27. Families with children aged 0 to 11 years and at least one employed parent: whether parents used work arrangements to care for child(ren) by type used(a), June 1993**

Work arrangements used	Families with an employed father	Families with an employed mother	Families with either parent employed
	- % -		
<i>Work arrangements used</i>			
Flexible working hours	63.9	43.7	54.2
Permanent part-time work	3.0	41.3	35.0
Shiftwork	18.6	9.5	14.7
Work at home	27.1	27.4	28.5
Job sharing	2.4	4.3	4.0
Other	3.4	2.2	3.1
<b>Total who used work arrangements</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>312.2</b>	<b>572.4</b>	<b>710.4</b>
Did not use work arrangements ('000)	967.5	265.9	697.2
<b>All families with children aged 0-11 and at least one parent employed ('000)</b>	<b>1,279.7</b>	<b>838.3</b>	<b>1,407.6</b>

(a) Components do not add to total as parents could use more than one type of working arrangement.

Source: Child Care Survey

**Table 28. Employed principal carers(a): whether often needs time off work for the caring role by type of leave arrangements used, 1993**

Whether need time off and type of leave arrangement	Males	Females	Persons
	- % -		
<i>Needed time off work</i>			
Type of leave used-			
Sick leave	**8.8	*7.3	*7.8
Flexible hours	41.1	41.4	41.3
Recreation or long service leave	*26.6	*12.9	17.7
Other	**10.0	*20.7	16.9
Not a wage/salary earner	*30.5	26.2	27.7
<b>All who needed time off work</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number ('000)</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>47.2</b>
<i>Did not need time off work ('000)</i>	55.5	112.9	168.4
<i>Not stated ('000)</i>	*2.3	*1.4	*3.7
<b>All employed principal carers ('000)</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>144.9</b>	<b>219.3</b>

(a) Of persons who require assistance with self-care, mobility or verbal communication. Five per cent were caring for non-family members. (b) Components do not add to total as more than one type of arrangement could be used.

Source: Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers

Around a fifth of employed principal carers for family members or others with disabilities often needed time off work because of their caring role. Both men and women most commonly used flexible working hours (41%) in these circumstances. A similar proportion of men (9%) and women (7%) used sick leave. However, men were more likely to use recreation or long service leave (27%) than women (13%).

## Employer assistance with child care

Employers offering some form of formal child care assistance to their employees are relatively rare. In 1993, 6 per cent of the 1.2 million families with children aged 11 and under and at least one parent who was a wage or salary earner, were offered such assistance by their employer. Of those who were offered assistance, 28 per cent used the assistance.

Mothers are more likely than fathers both to be offered assistance and then to use it once it is offered. Seven per cent of mothers who were wage or salary earners were offered assistance compared with 3 per cent of fathers. Thirty-five per cent of mothers who were offered assistance made use of it, compared with 16 per cent of fathers. Work-based child care was the most common type of assistance offered to either parent (4%), followed by a child care referral/information service (2%).

**Table 29. Families with children aged 0 to 11 years and at least one wage and salary earning parent: type of employer assistance offered by whether employer assistance offered or used, June 1993**

Sex of parent and type of employer assistance offered	Offered		Total	% in category offered assistance
	Used	Not used		
	- % -		- '000 -	
<i>Sex</i>				
Fathers	15.6	84.4	27.7	3.0
Mothers	35.2	64.8	46.7	6.9
<i>Type of assistance(a)</i>				
Work-based child care facilities	29.4	70.6	43.6	3.8
Reserved places in local child care services	*14.2	85.8	8.7	0.8
Employer supported vacation care	*22.7	77.3	8.7	0.8
Child care referral/information service	*12.8	87.2	17.7	1.5
Salary package which includes child care fees	42.7	57.3	9.0	0.8
<b>All types of assistance</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>72.0</b>	<b>70.2</b>	<b>6.1</b>

(a) Components do not add to total as more than one type of employer assistance could be offered and/or used.

Source: Child Care Survey

## GLOSSARY

### FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

*In this section, the term 'family' refers only to the household family.*

A *child* is a family member living with at least one parent (natural or step) in the same household and who does not have a child (natural or step) or spouse of their own usually resident in the household.

A *couple* is two usual residents, both aged 15 years and over, who are either registered married to each other or living in a de facto relationship with each other. Prior to 1994, the ABS did not classify a homosexual couple as a couple in its collections. All surveys in this publication were collected prior to 1994. Homosexual couples appear as 'unrelated individuals' in a family or group household.

A *de facto* relationship is where a man and woman live together as husband and wife but are not registered as married to each other.

A *dependent child* is a usual resident child aged under 15 years, or aged 15 to 24 years and studying full-time.

A *family* is two or more persons living in the same household who are related to each other by blood, marriage, de facto partnering, fostering or adoption.

A *family household* is a household that contains a family, regardless of whether other persons reside in the household.

A *group household* is a household containing two or more unrelated individuals, and no related individuals.

A *household* is a lone person or a group of people who usually reside together. Communal institutions (eg. boarding schools, mental institutions) are excluded. A household may consist of:

- one person;
- one family;
- one family and unrelated individuals;
- related families with or without unrelated individual(s);
- unrelated families with or without unrelated individual(s);
- unrelated individuals.

A *lone parent* is a usual resident aged 15 years and over who does not have a usual resident spouse (marriage or de facto) but has at least one usually resident child (natural, step or otherwise related) who does not have a usually resident spouse (marriage or de facto) or child of their own.

A *lone person household* is a household containing one person only.

*Natural children* include those who are fostered or adopted.

A *non-dependent child* is a usual resident child aged 25 years and over, or aged 15 to 24 years and not studying full-time.

A *one parent family* comprises a lone parent and that parent's child(ren) plus all other persons in the household related to them, provided those persons do not have a spouse or child of their own.

*Other family household* comprises other related individuals living in family households, and other related individuals living together or with couple and one parent families.

*Other related individual* is a related individual who is not the spouse, child, parent or ancestor of any usual resident eg. aunts, uncles.

*Otherwise related dependent child* is a usually resident dependent child who is not the natural or step child of any lone parent/ either member of couple in the household.

A *parent* is a usual resident aged 15 years and over who has at least one usually resident child (natural, step or otherwise related) and that child does not have a spouse or child of their own.

A *partner* is a spouse in a de facto relationship or registered marriage between people of the opposite sex usually resident in the same household. Prior to 1994, the ABS did not classify homosexuals as partners in its collections. All surveys in this publication were collected prior to 1994. Homosexual partners appear as 'unrelated individuals' in a family or group household.

*Registered marriage* is a formally registered marriage for which the partners hold a marriage certificate.

*Related families [and unrelated individual(s)]* exist where a household contains at least two families of whom at least two are related.

A *related individual* is a usual resident who is related to at least one other usual resident by blood, marriage (including de facto), adoption or fostering. They must not have a spouse usually resident in the household. They must not have a child usually resident in the household who does not have a usually resident spouse or child.

*Spouse* is a non-sex-specific term which means registered marriage or de facto partner.

A *usual resident* of a private dwelling is a person who lives in that particular dwelling and regards it as their only or main home.

## EMPLOYMENT

*Absence from work* is an absence from the workplace during normal working hours for more than 3 hours. An absence due to normal working arrangements, such as a rostered day off, time off on flex leave or time off in lieu is not included under this definition. Absences due to worker's compensation are not included.

*Barriers to labour force participation* occur for those persons identified as not in the labour force and who would like a full-time or part-time job but have not looked for work during the past four weeks. It also includes those people who are looking for work, but if offered a job, could not start work within the next week. Specific barriers include:

### Personal considerations-

- own ill health or pregnancy;
- pregnancy;
- studying;

### Family responsibilities-

- caring for children;
- caring for sick, disabled or elderly family member;
- looking after spouse/home;
- other reason not identified.

A *break from work* is a period of six months or more away from work since began working for current employer. Persons who had worked for their current employer for more than ten years were only asked about breaks in the last ten years.

*Casual employees* are those who are not entitled to annual or sick leave in their current position.

*Employed persons* are those aged 15 years and over and currently work for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business, or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and self-employed persons), or work without pay in a family business or on a farm (ie unpaid family helpers).

*Employees* are persons aged 15 years and over who worked in their current position for an employer for wages or salary including owner-managers (ie persons who worked in their own business, with or without employees, if that business was a limited liability company). School students aged 15 to 20 years who also worked as wage and salary earners and persons who worked solely for payment in kind were excluded.

*Full-time employed persons* are those who usually work 35 hours or more per week in all jobs.

*Job-holders* are employees as defined and persons who were away from work for four weeks or more without pay, or who were stood down for less than four weeks for reasons other than bad weather/plant breakdown, or who were away from work on workers' compensation and not returning (or unsure about returning) to their employer.

*Labour force* comprises, for any group, persons aged 15 years and over who are employed or unemployed.

*Labour force activities*, in the Time Use Survey, include activities carried out in paid employment, or unpaid work in a family business or farm; job search activities; and related activities such as travel to work or in the course of job search, and time spent in the workplace during work breaks.

*Labour force participation rate* is, for any group, the number of persons who are employed or unemployed, expressed as a percentage of all persons in that group.

*Labour force status* classifies persons as employed, unemployed or not in the labour force. For the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, this classification excludes school students.

*Not in the labour force* describes those individuals who are not employed in any job, business or farm, and have not looked for work during the last four weeks, and those permanently unable to work. Also included are those people who are looking for work, but if offered a job, could not start work within the next week.

*Occupation* is coded according to the *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO)* from the respondent's description of the kind of work they perform.

*Part-time employed persons* are those employed persons who usually work less than 35 hours per week in all jobs.

*Permanent employees* are employees who are entitled to annual leave or sick leave in their main job.

*Persons employed at home* are those who usually worked more hours at home than elsewhere in their main or second job or business. Unpaid voluntary workers and persons who worked less than one hour per week are excluded. In the Labour Force Surveys, farmers, farm managers, farm hands and assistants were also excluded.

*Sector of employment* is used to classify a respondent's employer as a public or private enterprise. Public sector includes local government authorities, government departments, agencies and authorities created by, or reporting to the Commonwealth and State parliaments. All remaining employees are classified as private sector.

*Size of location* is the number of persons employed at the location of the respondent's current position.

*Unemployed persons* are not currently employed in any job, business or farm and have looked for work during the last four weeks and would be able to start work within the next week.

*Unemployment rate* is, for any group, the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force in the same group.

*(Unpaid) household work* refers to the three major activity groups of domestic activities, child care and purchasing. Domestic activities include domestic management, home and car maintenance and improvement, pet care, care of the grounds; food preparation, service and clean-up; washing, ironing and tidying activities.



*Weekly hours worked* includes paid and unpaid overtime worked in all jobs.

*Work, if unqualified*, refers to paid employment.

## GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

A *Non-English speaking country* is one other than a Main English speaking country.

An *other Main English speaking country* (other than Australia) is a country from which Australia receives significant numbers of overseas settlers who are likely to speak English. These are Canada, England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, United States of America, South Africa and New Zealand.

## PERSONAL CARE/HOME HELP/CHILD CARE

*Formal child care* refers to regulated care away from the child's home and includes:

- before and after school care;
- pre-school and kindergarten centres;
- long day care centres;
- family day care;
- occasional care centres;
- adjunct care centres.

*Informal child care* is non-regulated care either in the child's home or elsewhere. Care could be free or charged for by the carer and includes:

- usually resident family members and relatives [other than (step) mothers and (step) fathers];
- non-usually resident relatives;
- neighbours and friends;
- privately employed persons;
- any other person.

A *provider of personal care/home help* is a person who provides personal care/home help to a family member because of that family member's long term illness, disability or old age. Personal care/home help comprises:

- meals (preparing, cooking, feeding);
- housework (vacuuming, washing, ironing, cleaning floors/bathrooms);
- house repair/maintenance;
- personal care (washing, bathing, dressing, toileting);
- general nursing care (help to administer drugs, continuing supervision).

## DISABILITY

The *International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps* definition for disability is as follows:

In the context of health experience, a disability is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.

For the purposes of the 1993 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers:

*Disability* is defined as the presence of one or more of a selected group of limitations, restrictions or impairments which had lasted, or were likely to last, for a period of six months or more.

A person with a *disability without a handicap* has one of the broad limitations, restrictions or impairments as given for disability, but is not restricted in any of the specific tasks given to identify persons with a handicap.

A *handicap* is identified as a limitation to perform certain tasks associated with daily living. The limitation must be due to a disability and in relation to one or more of the following areas: self-care; mobility; verbal communication; schooling and employment. For more information, refer to *Disability, Ageing and Carers: User Guide (4431.0)*.

A *principal carer* is a person aged 15 years and over providing the most informal care for the activities of self-care, mobility or verbal communication. Principal carers are chosen (by the care recipient) from the main carers nominated for the activities of self-care, mobility or verbal communication. A recipient can identify only one principal carer.

## APPENDIX A

### References

#### ABS publications

- Australian Social Trends (4102.0)
- Australia's Families: Selected Findings from the Survey of Families in Australia (4418.0)
- Career Experience, Australia (6254.0)
- Child Care, Australia (4402.0)
- Focus on Families: Caring in Families - Support for Persons who are Older or have Disabilities (forthcoming) (4423.0)
- Focus on Families: Demographics and Family Formation (4420.0)
- Focus on Families: Education and Employment (4421.0)
- Persons Employed at Home, Australia (6275.0)
- Working Arrangements, Australia (6342.0)

#### Other publications

- Cass, Bettina, 'Reframing family policies: Towards a lasting legacy of the International Year of the Family' in Jane Inglis and Lyla Rogan, Flexible Families: New Directions in Australian Communities, Pluto Press, Darlinghurst, 1994
- Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, Our Children, our Future: Australia's National Program of Action, AGPS, Canberra, 1994
- International Labour Organisation, 'Convention concerning equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women workers: workers with family responsibilities', No. 156, 1981(a)
- International Labour Organisation, 'Recommendation concerning equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women workers: workers with family responsibilities', No. 165, 1981(b)
- McCreadie, Sue, 'I haven't had so much fun since the International Year of the Piano Tuner' in Jane Inglis and Lyla Rogan, Flexible Families: New Directions in Australian Communities, Pluto Press, Darlinghurst, 1994
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- Russell, G., 'Fathers as caregivers', Australian Journal of Sex, Marriage and the Family, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 101-110
- VandenHeuvel, Audrey, When Roles Overlap: Workers with Family Responsibilities, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Monograph No. 14, Melbourne, 1993
- Wolcott, Ilene, Work and Family: Employers' Views, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Monograph No. 11, Melbourne, 1991

Work and Family Unit, Department of Industrial Relations, Strategy for Implementing Labour Organisation Convention 156 across Commonwealth Policies and Programs, AGPS, Canberra, 1992(a) .

Work and Family Unit, Department of Industrial Relations, Summary of Strategy for Implementing Labour Organisation Convention 156 across Commonwealth Policies and Programs, AGPS, Canberra, 1992(b)

## Related Publications

Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings, Australia, 1993 (4430.0)

Time Use Survey Australia: How Australians Use their Time (4153.0)

Focus on Families - A Statistical Series:

- Demographics and Family Formation (4420.0)
- Education and Employment (4421.0)
- Caring in Families - Support for Persons who are Older or have Disabilities (4423.0) (forthcoming)
- Income and Housing (4424.0) (forthcoming)
- Family Life (4425.0) (forthcoming)

Workers and their Family Responsibilities (4408.5) (Western Australia, forthcoming)

Current publications produced by the ABS are contained in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products*, Australia (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. Both publications are available from any ABS office.

## Symbols used

- \* relative standard error greater than 25 and up to 50 per cent.
- \*\* relative standard error over 50 per cent. Figures should be used with caution. If appears in place of an estimate, the estimate is zero.
- .. not applicable.

Estimates may have been rounded and discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

## Unpublished statistics

As well as the statistics included in this and related publications, the ABS has other unpublished data available. Inquiries should be made to the Information Consultancy Service contact shown at the rear of this publication.

Data can be made available as:

- special tabulations;
- tabulations utilising the PROTAB facility;
- publications and products, including unit record data;
- statistical consultancy service.

## **Special tabulations**

Special tabulations can be produced on request to meet individual user requirements. These can be provided in printed form or on floppy disk. Subject to confidentiality and sampling variability constraints, tabulations can be produced from a survey incorporating data items, populations and geographic areas selected to meet individual requirements.

## **PROTAB**

PROTAB is a Personal Computer based software system, supplied on floppy disk, that is an alternative means of access for clients who have on-going or complex requirements for data. Clients can use PROTAB to browse the complete list of variables that can be cross-classified for the Family Survey, select some of these, and use these variables to produce unambiguous specifications for their required tables. PROTAB will also supply approximate costs for the generated tables. Clients can then fax the table specifications to the ABS where they will be processed. In most cases the tables will be returned within 48 hours of receipt of the specifications.

## **Unit Record File**

A unit record data file is available for some survey collections. The file is hierarchical, comprising a subset of variables at the person, family and household levels. It provides purchasers with an opportunity to undertake their own detailed analysis of the data. Deletion of some variables and aggregation of categories in other variables ensures confidentiality of individual respondents is maintained. Enquiries should be made to the contact officer listed at the front of this publication.



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